Thomas F. Torrance

SCS 4404

THIRTY-FOUR

SERMON

ON THE

Most interesting Doctrines of the Gospel.

DISCOVERING

Clearly and evidently to every Capacity,

The Difference betwixt Faith and Works, Law and Gospel, the Christian and Creature Operations, Troubles and Consolations, and the best way to make Christians, keep them so, and in case of Relapses to recover them again by Christ, the only Cure of all Soul Maladies.

BY THAT

Eminent and great Reformer from Popery,

MARTIN LUTHER.

To which is prefix'd,

A brief Account of the AUTHOR'S LIFE,

AND,

A VIEW of his gracious Spirit.

GLASGOW:

Printed by JOHN BRYCE, and sold by him at his Shop in the SALT-MARKET. 1767.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THESE Sermons were first published in the German and soon after in the Latin Tongue, upwards of two-hundred Years ago, by the Author himself; and in 1581, were translated and printed in English, and though they have since that time been several times re-printed, yet they are now become so exceeding scarce, that an old torn Copy has sold for six or seven Shillings. At the earnest desire of some, who have read, and justly esteems them, as excellent Sermons, it is proposed to reprint them now, That the Age might be benefited thereby, and receive those Doctrines from one of the greatest and first Reformers, who stood firm against the Efforts of the whole Power of the Church of Rome, for which we and all succeeding Ages have reason to rejoice.

The Texts of Scripture, which in the former Editions, were according to the old Translation of the Bible, are here altered to our new Translation; also several absolete Words changed into modern; but not so as any way to alter the Sense of the Author, who, it may be justly said, has not been excelled, if equalled, by any, in clearing the most important Points of Christian Doctrine.

SCS #1404

The Life of MARTIN LUTHER.

MARTIN LUTHER was born, Nov. 10th, Anno 1483. at a town in the Earldom of Marsfelt, called Isleben, his father being John Luther of the same place, descended of honourable parantage, his mother's name before her marriage was Margaret Lindeman, who in his infancy instructed him in the ways of virtue, so far forth as his tender years were capable to bear.

When he came to years of discretion, he was sent to Magdeburg, wherein the Free-school he greatly profited in learning, especially he there was taught to expound the Apostle's Creed, and make use of the Fathers, the reading of whose works he greatly affected: when he had staved there a considerable time, he went to the University of Erford, where in a short time he so profited in his studies, that the whole University admired his wit and learning.

At twenty years of age he was made Master of Arts, and Professor of Physic, after which, he studied the Law; but none of these agreed with his temper, God having designed him for a better work, whereupon he rejecting the former, bent his mind wholly upon studying Divine things, and to be the more retire from noise and wordly business, he entered into the College of the Augustine Monks, and became one of their order, there he continued some time very zealous for the Romish religion; but within a while he began to dislike the errors that had crept into that church, as plainly perceiving that the religion was for the most part composed of traditions, as the ordinances of councils and decrees, the which were altogether disconsonant to the word of God, so that by excessive grief for the apostate state of the Romish church, he fell sick, and almost despaired of recovery, when as an old priest came to him, and bid him be of "good comfort, for that his disease was not mortal, but

" that God would raise him up to be a comfort to many o-
" thers :" the same priest also discoursed with him concerning Justification by Faith, and explained to him the Articles of the Creed; after the recovery of that sickness he was made Presbyter, and by the persuasion of John Staupicius went to the University of Wittemberg, where after he had continued for the space of three years, gained great commendation.

In the year 1512, seven convents of his order having a quarrel with their vicar-general, Luther was pitched upon to go to Rome, to maintain their cause. He was indeed a most proper person for such employments as these; for he was a man of a most firm and steady temper, and had a prodigious share of natural courage, which nothing could break or daunt. At Rome he saw the Pope and the court, and had an opportunity of observing also the manners of the clergy, whose hasty, superficial, and impious way of celebrating mass, he has severely noted. " I performed mass, " says he, at Rome; I saw it also performed by others, " but in such a manner, that I never think of it without " the utmost horror." And beholding their dissolute manner of living, and the wicked practices there used, he grew into a greater dislike of that religion, for there, as himself reports, he heard strumpets at the communion-table boast of their wickedness, and that he had heard others concerning the bread and wine, scoffingly say, " That bread thou " art, and bread thou shalt remain; and wine thou art, " and wine thou shalt remain :" which made him imagine that the church stood in great need of reformation. He often spoke afterwards with great pleasure of his journey to Rome; and used to say, that he " would not but have " made it for a thousand florins." As soon as he had adjusted the dispute, which was the business of his journey, he returned to Wittemberg, and was created Doctor of Divinity, at the expence of Fredrick, elector of Saxony; who had often heard him preach, was perfectly acquainted with his merit, and revereneed him highly. Luther, it seems, declined at first the honour of this degree, on account of his being, in his own opinion, too young, for he was only in his thirtieth year; but it was told him, that " he must " suffer himself to be dignified, for that God intended to " bring about great things in the church by his means :" which, though it was certainly said in jest, proved at length a very serious truth.

A while after he began to explain the epistle to the Romans, and many of the Psalms of David, and began more and more to decline the superstition of the Romish church; so that when one John Tecclius coming from Rome, brought the pope's Indulgencies into Germany, persuading the people that they were of such a sin-purging quality, that whatever sins they committed, if they could but purchase

chaſe one of them, they ſhould have them all remitted; this wicked impoſtor ſo ſtirs the zeal of Luther, that he wrote againſt his indulgencies, laying open the cheat to the world, which ſo enraged the indulgence merchant, that he bitterly exclaimed againſt him, and getting as many of his books as he could, he burned them; whereupon he yet once more wrought againſt his trumpery, at which time many of the divines of the univerſity took part with Luther in what he did, and now he began to preach his doctrine of reformation openly, defending it againſt the Auguſtine-Friars at Hedleburg, he being honourably entertained by them of Worſtburg and Volfgang, the count Palatine there; he drew many to partake with him in his opinion, of which the emperor Maximilian having notice, ſent to advertiſe the pope thereof, and to bid him take timely care for the extirpating the new opinions that were lately ſprung up, and that whatſoever meaſures he ſhould take he ſhould ſee them put in execution throughout the empire.

Upon the receipt of the Emperor's letters, Pope Leo then holding the papacy cited Luther to appear before the council of cardinals at Rome, and ſignified as much to cardinal Cajetan his legate; whereupon the cardinal going to Auſpurg, and finding Luther there, deſired the Emperor to ſet a guard upon him, in order to carry him to Rome, unleſs he would ſpeedily recant, but his requeſt was not at that time fulfilled.

The Pope likewiſe wrote a letter to the Elector of Saxony to complain againſt Luther, and to forbid him to entertain him within his dukedom, and that if he took him within his juriſdiction, he ſhould forthwith ſend him to Rome, there to be condemned or acquitted; but the elector gave little heed to the pope's letter, though he threatened him therein, if he complied not with his will: but when he perceived theſe projects fail, he ſent to the maſter of the Auguſtine monks, to ſee if he could prevail with him to return to his former obedience, and renounce his later opinion, but this proved alſo ineffectual.

Yet Luther deſirous to juſtify his doctrine, made earneſt ſuit that he might appear before competent judges to be heard in his own country, and not at Rome, where he was aſſured to find his judges his enemies. In his behalf alſo the univerſity of Wittemberg wrote to the pope, giving him an account of his great learning, doctrine, and pious courſe of life, deſiring that he might be heard in Germany; in fine prince Frederick of Saxony ſo far prevailed with the pope's legate, that he conſented that Luther ſhould be heard at Auſpurg, at what time the Bohemians ſent a book to him, which was written by John Huſs, deſiring him to perſevere in what he had begun.

A while after Eraſmus was ſolicited to write againſt him, but he declined it, although a biſhopric was profered him

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for so doing, saying, "He had learned more out of one "page of Luther's book, than of the large volume of "Thomas Aquinas."

Luther being now cited to appear before the pope's legate at Ausburg, procured the emperor's letters of safe conduct, when coming into the legate's presence, after some questions asked and objections made, he not only justified his doctrine, but offered to maintain the same by disputation or writing, but the cardinal being much offended at such his offer, would not permit him to be brought before him any more; so that having waited six days, he departed home; but the cardinal wrote after him to the duke of Saxony, that as he loved his honour and safety, he would expel him his dominions: this letter the duke sent to Luther, who wrote back to the legate, that rather than he would any ways endanger his prince, he would retire into what part soever of the world the Lord would please to lead him; but the university of Wintenberg wrote to the duke desiring him that he would take him into his protection, and not suffer innocency to be oppressed by force, and that if Luther had preached or did maintain any error, he might be fairly convicted of the same, upon which the duke began to take his part more than formerly, and sent to the cardinal, that seeing he having come to Ausburg had performed his promise, and could do no more in that affair.

After the death of Maximilian, and the coronation of Charles, the pope sent to the duke of Saxony, requesting him to cause all Luther's books to be burnt, and that he would see Luther either executed in Saxony, or that he would send him guarded to Rome, to which the duke replied, that he was ready to yield obedience to the pope, but that he could not send Luther to him before his cause was heard before the emperor, and till he was convicted of some error, and then if he recanted not, he should find no favour at his hands.

A while after a disputation was held between Luther and and one Eccius at Lipsick, wherein the former prevailed, and his doctrine so spread itself, that the friars and monks fearing to be unhived, sent to the pope to charge him with neglecting the church affairs, by giving himself up to pleasures; in the mean time suffering the doctrine of Luther to spread even in the very heart of Germany, upon which the pope began to bestir himself, by sending his bull against him; in which he excommunicated not only him, but all his partakers, commanding all men to apprehend him, and bring him to Rome, and that his books should be burnt, of which Luther hearing burnt the pope's bull lately sent out against him, together with several decrees and councils.

Not long after the emperor coming into Germany, the duke of Saxony so far prevailed with him, that he was content to hear him upon the diet, of which Luther having notice,

tice, greatly rejoiced, though some of his friends persuaded him from going, saying, that the public faith would be broken, as it was with John Huss; whereupon he told them, "That such discouragements were cast in the way by satan, "who knew that his profession of the truth in such a noble "place would be a means to shake his kingdom, adding, "that if he knew there were as many devils in Worms, as "there were tiles upon the houses, yet he would go thi-"ther."

He being arrived at Worms, some of the popish clergy went about to persuade the emperor to apprehend him, and commit him to prison; but he would by no means hearken to their wicked counsel, alledging that the public faith ought not to be broken; the next day after his coming he presented himself before the council assembled for that purpose; the emperor being there present, where one Eccius a lawyer, at the command of the emperor made a speech, "In "which he demanded of Luther, that he would retract his "works and doctrine, telling him, that it was the empe-"rors pleasure he should do so, and if he refused it he must "expect his displeasure," to which he replied, "As to "my books, some of them tend to faith, and to these my "adversaries give an ample testimony, others are against "the pope and his doctrine, the which if I should revoke I "should confirm his tyranny, and some of them are against "private men, who defend the pope's cause, against whom "I must confess I have been somewhat too sharp, yet I "cannot revoke them, unless I will set open a gap for the "imprudence of many."

But this answer nothing pleased the emperor, who would be satisfied with nothing less than Luther's recantation, nor would he suffer him to defend his doctrine by scripture and other warrantable arguments, though he earnestly desired it, telling the emperor, "That unless he could satisfy his "conscience that his doctrine was false, he could by no "means recant the same;" whereupon he was ordered to depart the council, and the next day the emperor sent his letters to the princes, to acquaint them that he was resolved to proscribe Luther and all his accomplices, upon which they were divided, the greatest part, and those of the most noble amongst them, alledging that Luther was not rashly to be condemned, for that the emperor was young, and in matters of religion altogether guided by the popish clergy.

The next day the bishop of Trevers sent for Luther, and used many arguments to persuade him to a recantation, telling him withal, that if he refused it was the emperor's purpose to banish him, to whom Luther replied, "that he "took it as a great favour, that so great a prince would "put himself to so much trouble for so mean a person as he "was;" after that one Væus a lawyer came from the emperor to persuade him to recant, but he not consenting to

his requeſt, the emperor ſent to him to depart home, and withal gave him twelve days ſo to do, after the end of which he preſcribed him; whereupon prince Frederick appointed ſome of his moſt truſty nobles to convey him ſecretly to Wartsburg, where he continued ten months notwithſtanding diligent ſearch was made for him, and great ſums of money offered: nay, his enemies employed wizards and witches to uſe their art to find out the place of his abode, but in vain; at the end of ten months he returned to Wittemberg, where he was moſt joyfully received by the univerſity, from whence he ſent letters to prince Frederick to excuſe himſelf for leaving Wartsburg without his knowledge, telling him, "That it was God's cauſe he undertook, and "that God would protect him from the rage of his ene-"mies."

A while after he printed the New Teſtament which he had tranſlated into the German tongue at Wartsburg, which place he uſually called his Patmos, which did not not a little diſpleaſe king Henry the eighth of England, and George duke of Saxony.

About this time one Thomas Muncer wrote a fanatic book againſt his doctrine, and perſuaded the boors to rebel, who being perſuaded by him to throw off all obedience to their princes, took arms in great numbers, againſt which unlawful proceedings, Luther wrote ſeveral treatiſes, perſuading them to yield obedience to their princes, ſhewing them how diſconſonant ſuch practices were to the word of God, but when this prevailed not the princes drew out their forces, and with more convincing arguments taught them obedience. For coming to a battel about five thouſand four hundered of them was ſlain, and their ſeditious ringleaders Muncer and Feſtifer taken, the former being put upon the rack to confeſs his accomplices, cried out grievouſly, when as prince George of Saxony bid him "think upon the ſlaugh-"ter of the poor wretches, who ſeduced by him fell in bat-"tel the day before:" Whereupon he laughing out-right ſaid, "they would be ſeduced;" in fine he and his companion with ſome others were beheaded; but ſo ended not the war, which was called the war of the clowns, for before the rebellion was ſuppreſſed about fifty thouſand were ſlain.

In the year 1523, a diet was held at Norinberg, where the edict of Worms was made void, upon which the pope's legate complained grievſlyou ſaying, "That ſince the publication "of the edict neither Luther nor any of his accomplices "had been publiſhed." To which the princes anſwered, "That ſince the pope and his clergy had neglected refor-"mation in the church, Germany had been greatly enlight-"ened by the ſermons of Luther, and that if they ſhould "go about to puniſh him, the people would think they "went about to extinguiſh the light of the goſpel, the bet-

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" ter to obſcure thoſe manifeſt vices that could be no long-
" er hid; and that ſuch proceedings would raiſe up great
" tumults." The Romaniſts ſeeing this, reſolved to bring him into ſilence, but in vain: a while after Luther being ſummoned to Auſpurg, he there made a confeſſion of his faith in ſeventeen articles, to the great ſatisfaction of moſt that heard him

In October 1524, Luther flung off the monaſtic habit; which, through not premeditated and deſigned, was yet a very proper preparative to a ſtep he took the year thereafter; we mean his marriage with Catharine de Bore. Catharine de Bore was a gentleman's daughter, who had been a nun, and was taken, as we have obſerved, out of the nunnery of Nimptſchen, in the year 1523. Luther had a deſign, as Melchior Adam relates, to marry her to Glacius, a miniſter of Ortamunden; but ſhe did not like Glacius, and ſo Luther married her himſelf, upon the 13th of June 1525. This conduct of his was blamed not only by the catholics, but, as Melancthon ſays, by thoſe of his own party. He was even for ſome time aſhamed of it himſelf; and owns, that his marriage had made him ſo deſpicable, that he hoped his humiliation would rejoice the angels, and vex the devils. Melancthon found him ſo afflicted with what he had done, that he wrote ſome letters of conſolation to him: he adds, however, that " this accident may poſſibly not be
" without its uſe, as it tends to humble him a little: for it
" is dangerous, ſays he, not only for a prieſt, but for any
" man, to be too much elated and puffed up: great ſucceſs
" giving occaſion to the ſin of a high mind, not only, as the
" orator ſays, in fools, but ſometimes in wiſe men." It was not ſo much the marriage, as the circumſtances of the time, and the precipitation with which it was done, that occaſioned the cenſures paſſed upon Luther. He married all of a ſudden, and at a time when Germany was groaning under the miſeries of a war, which was ſaid at leaſt to be owing to Lutheraniſm. Then again, it was thought an indecent thing of a man of forty-two years of age, who was then, as he pretended, reſtoring the goſpel and reforming mankind, to involve himſelf in marriage with a woman of ſix and twenty, either through incontinence, or any account whatever. But Luther, as ſoon as he had recovered himſelf a little from this abaſhment, aſſumed his former air of intrepidity, and boldly ſupported what he had done with reaſons. " I took a wife, ſays he, in obedience to my fa-
" ther's commands, and haſtened the conſummation, in or-
" der to prevent impediments, and ſtop the tongues of
" ſlanderers." It appears from his own confeſſions, that this reformer was very fond of Mrs. de Bore, and uſed to call her his Catharine, which made profane people think and ſay wicked things of him; and therefore, ſays he, " I am married of a ſudden, not only that I might not be

" obliged

" obliged to hear the clamours which I knew would be " raiſed againſt me, but to ſtop the mouths of thoſe who " reproached me with Catherine de Bore." Luther alſo gives us to underſtand, that he did it partly as concurring with his grand ſcheme of oppoſing the catholics. " See, " ſays he, becauſe they are thus mad, I have ſo prepared " myſelf, that, before I die, I may be found in God in the " ſtate in which I was created, and, if poſſible, retain no- " thing of my former popiſh life. Therefore let them rave " yet more, and this will be their laſt farewel; for my " mind preſages, that I ſhall ſoon be called by God unto " his grace: therefore, at my father's commands, I have " taken a wife." In another letter he ſpeaks thus: " I " hope I ſhall live a little longer, and I would not deny " this laſt obedience to my father, who required it in hopes " of iſſue, and alſo to confirm the doctrines I have taught." And again: " I think I ſhall marry before I leave the world, " becauſe I believe it is commanded by God."

Luther, notwithſtanding, was not himſelf altogether ſatisfied with theſe reaſons. He did not think the ſtep he had taken could be ſufficiently juſtified upon the principles of human prudence; and therefore we find him, in other places, endeavouring to account for it from a ſupernatural impulſe. " The wiſe men amongſt us are greatly provoked, " ſays he; they are forced to own the thing to be of God, " but the diſguiſe of the perſons under which it is tranſact- " ed, namely, of the young woman and myſelf, makes " them think and ſay every thing that is wicked." And elſewhere: " The Lord brought me ſuddenly, when I was " thinking of other matters, to a marriage, with Catherine " de Bore, the nun." His party ſeem alſo to have favoured this ſuppoſition. Thus ſays Melancthon: " As for the " unreaſonableneſs and want of conſideration in this mar- " riage, on which account our adverſaries will chiefly ſlan- " der us, we muſt take heed leaſt that diſturb us: for per- " haps there is ſome ſecret, or ſomething divine couched " under it, concerning which it does not become us to en- " quire too curiouſly; nor ought we to regard the ſcoffs of " thoſe who exerciſe neither piety towards God, nor vir- " tue towards man." But whether there was any thing divine in it or not, Luther found himſelf extremely happy in his new ſtate, and eſpecially after his wife had brought him a ſon. " My rib Kate, ſays he in the joy of his " heart, deſires her compliments to you, and thanks you " for the favour of your kind letter. She is very well " through God's mercy. She is obedient and complying " with me in all things, and more agreeable, I thank God, " than I could have expected; ſo that I would not change " my poverty for the wealth of Croeſus." He was heard to ſay, Seckendorf tells us, that he would not exchange his wife for the kingdom of France, nor for the riches of the

the Venetians, and that for three reaſons: firſt, becauſe ſhe had been given him by God, at the time when he implored the aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, in finding a good wife: ſecondly, becauſe, though ſhe was not without faults, yet ſhe had fewer than other women: and, thirdly, becauſe ſhe religiouſly obſerved the conjugal fidelity ſhe owed him. There went at firſt a report, that Catherine de Bore was brought to bed, ſoon after her marriage with Luther; but Eraſmus, who had wrote that news to one of his friends, acknowledged the falſity of it a little after. Take his own humurous account of this matter, in a letter to one of his friends, dated the 13th of March, 1526: "Luther's marriage is certain; the report of his wife being ſo ſpeedily brought to bed is falſe; but I hear ſhe is now with child. If the common ſtory be true, that Antichriſt ſhall be born of a monk and a nun, how many thouſand antichriſts are there in the world already? I was in hopes, that a wife would have made Luther a little tamer: but he, contrary to all expectation, has publiſhed, indeed, a moſt elaborate, but as virulent a book againſt me, as ever he wrote. What will become of the pacific Eraſmus? to be obliged to deſcend upon the ſtage, at a time of life when gladiators are uſually diſmiſſed from the ſervice; and not only to fight, but to fight with beaſts."

A copy of the Proteſtation, taken by the Proteſtant Princes, againſt the continuation of the Popiſh Maſs.

The elector John of Saxony, for Frederick was dead, the elector of Brandenburg, Erneſtus, and Francis dukes of Lunenburg, the landgrave of Heſſe, and the prince of Anhalt, proteſted, "That they ought not to do any thing in prejudice of the determination of the former diet, which had granted liberty in religion, till the holding of the council; that that reſolution, having been taken by the unanimous conſent of all the members of the empire, could not be repealed, but by the like conſent; that, in the diet of Nurenburg, the original cauſe of all the differences in religion, was ſearched into, and that to allay them, they had offered to the pope eighty articles, to which his holineſs had given no anſwer; that the effect of their conſultations had always been, that the beſt way to end diſputes and reform abuſes, was to hold a council; that they could not ſuffer opinions to be forced from them, which judged true, and agreeable to the word of God, before the council was held; that their miniſters had proved, by by invincible arguments taken out of ſcripture, that the popiſh maſs was contrary to the inſtitution of Jeſus Chriſt, and the practice of the apoſtles, ſo that they could not agree to what was ordered in the diet; that they knew

"the

" the judgment of their churches concerning the preſence " of the body and blood of Chriſt in the euchariſt; but " that they ought not to make a decree againſt thoſe, who " were of a contrary opinion, becauſe they were neither " ſummoned nor heard; that they could indeed venture " to approve of the clauſe about preaching the goſpel ac- " cording to the interpretation received in the church, ſince " that did not determine the matter, it being yet in diſpute, " what was the true church; that there was nothing more " certain, than the word of God itſelf, which explains it- " ſelf, and therefore they would take care, that nothing " elſe ſhould be taught, but the Old and New Teſtament " in their purity; that they are the only infallible rule, and " that all human traditions are uncertain; that the decree " of the former diet was made for the preſervation of peace, " but that this laſt would infallibly beget wars and troubles. " For theſe reaſons they could not approve of the decree of " the diet, but yet would do nothing that ſhould be blame- " worthy, till a council, either general or national, ſhould " be held." Fourteen cities, viz. Straſburg, Nurenburg, Ulm, Conſtance, Retlingen, Windſheim, Memmingen, Lindow, Kempten, Halibron, Iſny, Weiſſemburg, Nortlingen, S. Gal, joined in this proteſtation, which was put in writing, and publiſhed upon the 18th of April, 1529, by an inſtrument, in which they appealed from all that ſhould be done to the emperor, a future council, either general or national, or to unſuſpected judges; and accordingly they appointed deputies to ſend to the emperor, to petition, that this decree might be revoked. This was the famous proteſtation, which gave the name of Proteſtants to the reformers in Germany.

It was at this time alſo that the proteſtant princes, ſigned the Confeſſion of Faith drawn up by Luther, Melancthon, and other proteſtant divines. It was ſigned by the elector of Saxony, the marquiſs of Brandenburg, Erneſtus and Francis dukes of Brunſwick and Lunenburg, the landgrave of Heſſe, the princes of Anhalt, and the deputies of the cities of Nurenburg and Retlingen.

Luther had now nothing elſe to do, but to ſit down and contemplate the mighty work he had finiſhed; for that a ſingle monk ſhould be able to give the church of Rome ſo rude a ſhock, that there needed but ſuch another intirely to overthrow it, may very well ſeem a mighty work. He did indeed little elſe; for the remainder of his life was ſpent in exhorting princes, ſtates, and univerſities, to confirm the reformation, which had been brought about through him; and publiſhing from time to time ſuch writings, as might encourage, direct, and aid them in doing it. The emperor threatened temporal puniſhments with armies, and the pope eternal with bulls and anathemas; but Luther cared for none of their threats. His friend and coadjutor Melancthon,

ſoftneſs, moderation, and diffidence in his make, which made him very uneaſy, and even ſorrowful in the preſent diſorders. Hence we find many of Luther's letters, written on purpoſe to ſupport and comfort him under theſe ſeveral diſtreſſes and anxieties: "I am, ſays he, in one of theſe "letters, much weaker than you in private conflicts, if I "may call thoſe conflicts private, which I have with the "devil; but you are much weaker than me in public. You "are all diffidence in the public cauſe, I, on the contrary, "am very ſanguine; becauſe I am confident it is a juſt and "a true cauſe, the cauſe of God and of Chriſt, which need "not look pale and tremble; whereas the caſe is very dif-"ferent with me in my private conflicts, who am a very "miſerable ſinner, and therefore have great reaſon to look "pale and tremble. Upon this account it is, that I can be "almoſt an indifferent ſpectator amidſt all the noiſy threats "and bullyings of the papiſts; for if we fall, the kingdom "of Chriſt falls with us; and if it ſhould fall, I had rather "fall with Chriſt, than ſtand with Caeſar." So again a little farther: "You, Melancthon, cannot bear theſe diſ-"orders, and labour to have things tranſacted by reaſon, "and agreeably to that ſpirit of calmneſs and moderation, "which your philoſophy dictates. You might as well at-"tempt to be mad with reaſon. Do not you ſee, that the "matter is intirely out of your power and management, "and that even Chriſt himſelf forbids your meaſures to "take place" This letter was written in the year 1539.

In the year 1534, the Bible tranſlated by him into German was firſt printed, as the old privilege, dated at Bibliopolis, under the elector's hand, ſhews; and it was publiſhed the year after. He alſo publiſhed this year a book againſt maſſes and the conſecration of prieſts, in which he relates a conference he had with the devil upon thoſe points; for it is remarkable in Luther's whole hiſtory, that he never had any conflicts of any kind within, but the devil was always his antagoniſt. In February 1537, an aſſembly was held at Smalkald about matters of religion, to which Luther and Melancthon were called. At this meeting Luther was ſeized with ſo grievous an illneſs, that there were no hopes of his recovery. He was afflicted with the ſtone, and had a ſtoppage of urine for eleven days. In this terrible condition he would needs undertake to travel, notwithſtanding all his friends could ſay and do to prevent him; his reſolution however was attended with a good effect, for the night after his departure he began to be better. As he was carried along, he made his will, in which he bequeathed his deteſtation of popery to his friends, and brethren; agreeably to what he often uſed to ſay: "Peſtis eram vivus, "moriens ero mors tua papa;" that is, "I was the "plague of popery in my life, and ſhall continue to be ſo "in my death."

This

This year the pope and the court of Rome, finding it impossible to deal with the protestants by force, began to have recourse to stratagem. They affected therefore to think, that though Luther had indeed carried things on with an high hand, and to a violent extreme, yet what he had pleaded in defence of these measures, was not intirely without foundation. They talked with a seeming shew of moderation; and Pius III. who succeeded Clement VII. proposed a reformation first among themselves, and even went so far as to fix a place, for a council to meet at for that purpose. But Luther treated this farce, as it deserved to be treated, unmasked and detected it immediately; and, to ridicule it the more strongly, caused a picture to be drawn, on which was represented the pope seated on high upon a throne, some cardinals about him with foxe's tails on, and seeming to evacuate upwards and downwards, "surfum deorsum repurgare," as Melchior Adam expresses it. This was fixed over against the title-page, to let the readers see at once the scope and design of the book; which was, to expose that cunning and artifice, with which those subtle politicians affected to cleanse and purify themselves from their errors and superstitions. Luther published about the same time a confutation of the pretended grant of Constantine to Sylvester bishop of Rome, and also some letters of John Huss, written from his prison at Constance, to the Bohemians.

In this manner was Luther employed till his death, which happened in the year 1546. That year, accompanied by Melancthon, he paid a visit to his own country, which he had not seen for many years, and returned again in safety. But soon after, he was called thither again by the earls of Mansfelt, to compose some differences, which had arisen about their boundaries. Luther not had been used to such matters; but because he was born at Isleben, a town in the territory of Mansfelt, he was willing to do his country what service he could, even in this way. Preaching his last sermon therefore at Wittemberg, upon the 17th of January, he set of on the 23d; and at Hall in Saxony lodged with Justus Jonas, with whom he stayed three days, because the waters were out. Upon the 28th, he passed over the river with his three sons, and Dr. Jonas; and being in some danger, he said to the doctor: "Do not you think it would re-"joice the devil exceedingly, if I and you, and my three "sons, should be drowned?" When he entered the territories of the earls of Mansfelt, he was received by 100 horsemen, or more, and conducted in a very honourable manner; but was at the same time so very ill, that it was feared he would die. He said, that these fits of sickness often came upon him, when he had any great business to undertake: of this however he did not recover, but died upon the 18th of February, in the 63d year of his age. A little before he expired,

expired, he admoniſhed thoſe that were about him to pray to God for the propagation of the goſpel; "becauſe," ſaid he, "the council of Trent, which had ſat once or twice, "and the pope, would deviſe ſtrange things againſt it." Soon after, his body was put into a leaden coffin, and carried with funeral pomp to the church at Iſleben, when Dr Jonas preached a ſermon upon the occaſion. The earls of Mansfelt deſired, that his body ſhould be interred in their territories; but the elector of Saxony inſiſted upon his being brought back to Wittemberg, which was accordingly done; and there he was buried with the greateſt pomp, that perhaps ever happened to any private man. Princes, earls, nobles, and ſtudents without number, attended the proceſſion; and Melancthon made his funeral oration.

A thouſand lies were invented by the papiſts about Luther's death. Some ſaid, that he died ſuddenly; others, that he killed himſelf; others, that the devil ſtrangled him; others, that his corpſe ſtunk ſo abominably, that they were forced to leave it in the way, as it was carried to be interred. Nay, lies were invented about his death, even while he was yet alive; for a pamphlet was publiſhed at Naples, and in other places of Italy, the year before, wherein was given the following account. "Luther being dan-"gerouſly ſick deſired to communicate, and died as ſoon as "he had received the viaticum. As he was dying, he de-"ſired his body might be laid upon the altar to be adored; "but that requeſt being neglected, he was buried. When, "lo! at his interment there aroſe a furious tempeſt, as if "the world was at an end; and the terror was univerſal. "Some, in lifting up their hands to heaven, perceived, "that the hoſt, which the deceaſed had preſumed to take, "was ſuſpended in the air: upon which it was gathered up "with great veneration, and laid in a ſacred place, and "the tempeſt ceaſed for the preſent: but it aroſe the night "following with greater fury, and filled the whole town "with conſternation: and the next day Luther's ſepulchre "was found open and empty, and a ſulphureous ſtench pro-"ceeded from it, which no body could bear. The aſſiſ-"tants fell ſick of it, and many of them repented, and re-"turned to the catholic church."

We ſhall here give the reader the character of Luther. Luther, ſays Mr. Wharton, in his appendix to Dr. Crave's Hiſtoria literaria, was "a man of prodigious ſagacity and "acuteneſs, very warm, and formed for great undertakings; "being a man, if ever there was one, whom nothing could "daunt or intimidate. When the cauſe of religion was con-"cerned, he never regarded whoſe love he was likely to "gain, or whoſe diſpleaſure to incur. He treated the pope's "bulls, and the emperor's edicts, juſt alike; that is, he "heartily deſpiſed both. In the mean time, it muſt be "owned, that Luther often gave a greater looſe to his pa-

" sions than he ought, and did not in his writings pay that " deference to crowned heads which it is always neceſſary to " pay: but every man has his foible, and this was Luther's. " However, he was very diligent in his application to let- " ters, and very learned, conſidering the times he lived in. " His chief purſuit was in the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, upon a " great part of which he wrote commentaries. He reform- " ed the Chriſtian religion from many errors and ſuperſtiti- " ons, with which it had been long corrupted; and reduced " it, as well at he could, to its primitive purity. If in ſome " places he appears not quite ſo orthodox, we muſt impute " it to the times, and not to him; for it is no wonder, that " one who attempts to clean ſuch a ſtable of Agueas, as the " church of Rome, ſhould not eſcape free from ſpots and " blemiſhes. He kept primitive antiquity conſtantly before " his eyes, as his guide and rule; and, as Eraſmus has ob- " ſerved, many things are condemned as heretical in the " writings of Luther, which are thought very orthodox " and pious in the books of Auguſtine and Bernard. Eraſ- " mus alſo ſays, that Luther wrote many things rather im- " prudently than impiouſly. His ſtile was rough and harſh; " for in thoſe days every body could not write like Eraſmus, " Politian, Bembus, &c. who were reading Tully, Livy, " and Terence. Yet how uncouth and inelegant ſoever his " ſtile may be, it every where breathes a genuine zeal and " piety, which is more ſolicitous about things than words."

Luther's works were collected after his death, and printed at Wittemberg in ſeven volumes folio. Catherine de Bore ſurvived her husband a few years, and continued the firſt year of her widowhood at Wittemberg, though Luther had adviſed her to ſeek another place of reſidence. She went from thence in the year 1547, when the town was ſurrendered to the emperor Charles V. Before her departure, ſhe had received a preſent of fifty crowns from Chriſtian III. king of Denmark; and the elector of Saxony, and the counts of Mansfelt, gave her good tokens of their liberality. With theſe additions, to what Luther had left her, ſhe had wherewithal to maintain herſelf and her family handſomely. She returned to Wittemberg, when the town was reſtored to the elector, where ſhe lived in a very devout and pious manner, till the plague obliged her to leave it again in the year 1552. She ſold what ſhe had at Wittemberg, and retired to Torgau, with a reſolution to end her life there. An unfortunate miſchance befel her in her journey thither, which proved fatal to her. The horſes growing unruly, and attempting to run away, ſhe leaped out of the vehicle ſhe was conveyed in; and, by leaping, got a fall, of which ſhe died about a quarter of a year after, at Torgau, upon the 20th of December, 1552.

A VIEW

A

VIEW of the gracious Spirit of *LUTHER.*

LUTHER, ſaith Melanchthon, is a miracle amongſt men. Another ſaith, That there was never any more truſty ſervaut to his maſter; never any of more undaunted courage in his maſter's cauſe; never any that adventured, or durſt adventure farther; never any that uſed more conſtancy, magnanimity and force in battering the fortreſſes of the enemy; never any that pierced deeper, prevailed farther, and procured larger for the ſafety of poor Chriſtians, ſo many hundred years oppreſſed, impriſoned, impoveriſhed, yoaked and chained in miſerable captivity, thro' the monſtrous outrage of the execrable Nimrod of Rome, than Luther. He had the enjoyments of God, by his ſpirit, in his boſom, and was carried on (though mightily oppoſed) to do good to the church and ſtate, in that age wherein he lived, by imparting what he had received from that all-powerful Spirit which revealed the hidden myſteries and deep things of God to him abundantly; and yet did not content himſelf with ſo doing, and like thoſe of Reuben, Manaſſeh and Gad beyond Jordan, Joſhua xxii. 21, 30. but was ſo carried on, by the ſame ſpirit, that he ſought the good of poſterity to come, and ſucceeding ages will have cauſe, as we have, to praiſe God for his labour of love and works extant, wherein we may ſolace ourſelves as he did. Who ſince Paul's death ſpake and wrote ſo of God, Chriſt, Chriſtians, the Law, Goſpel, Faith, Love, Grace and Works, ſetting them in their proper place, in converſation amongſt men, on this ſide Jeſus Chriſt, as Luther hath? Never man or woman that read Luther, but it pierced their hearts, and left behind a deep impreſſion in their minds, to the quieting of their perplexed, troubled and diſtreſſed conſciences, if they were Chriſtians; (Oh! what eaſe of heart refreſhings, and unſpeakable delights have they had!) but a wonderful

derful ſting in the conſciences of the wicked, eſpecially if they were brought up Antichriſtian, for they can't bear to hear, that all the glory of our ſalvation ſhould be given to God and Chriſt alone, and that Chriſtians ſhould have their joy, peace and conſolation from a ſure foundation, God's love in Chriſt Jeſus, whom Luther by the evident demonſtration of the Spirit hath moſt manifeſtly laid down for ſalvation; and for good works, none ever preſt them more upon men for converſation ſo exactly, and according to the ſpiritual meaning of the law, than Luther hath; and there is more ſolid divinity in one leaf of Luther's works, than in many prolix treatiſes extant. O what voices doth he utter? what light doth he hold forth? what ſpiritual majeſty, glory and power is there in his expreſſions? what heavenly doctrine doth he preach? what ſpiritual conſolations doth he propound? what great, profound, and continual exerciſes, practice and experience of inward conflicts, agonies and ſtraits of conſcience had he? what fights with Satan, the fleſh, the world, and the law, againſt ſin, death and all the infernal powers of hell? what contemplations of Chriſt, grace, juſtification and faith? yea, and his phraſe and eloquence of ſpeech doth diſcover ſo much holy boaſting and height of ſpirit, in the diſcovery of the ineſtimable, free, perfect and permanent love of God the Father, the admirable glory, durable riches and everlaſting kingdom ordained for ſaints elected, and purchaſed by Chriſt, yet ſalvation is free to us, though it coſt Chriſt full dear, all applied by faith, that maketh the nativity, conception, birth, thoughts, words, works, life, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, mediation or interceſſion of Chriſt, ours, and this the Spirit revealeth, and faith ſealeth up our ſalvation to us, and brings it home to the conſcience, and aſſures us that the conqueſt of Chriſt over ſin, death and hell is ours, and that ſatisfaction to the law made by Chriſt, whereby he hath pacified the wrath of God felt in our conſciences; ſo that all fears and terrors are removed, and conſcience diſcharged as if it had never been ſtung by ſin, that biting ſerpent, the jaws of hell ſo broken, death ſo vanquiſhed, the

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teeth of the law so beaten out that they can bite us no more, shut us up prisoners no more, neither hurt the poorest Christian once freed, clothed and healed by Christ, and enjoying him by faith, how ghastly, strong and terrible soever they appear to sense, reason or incredulity that lies hid in our nature, like the viper's teeth under his gums, and too too often breaks forth to our great disturbance. In all these feats of spiritual activity and soul victories, he is much to be wondred at and praised, by sacred faith, so highly was he raised, as may appear in some few instances following, collected out of his works. When the law would trouble the conscience, and rule there, and disturb the Christian's sweet enjoyment of Christ; thus saith he, O law, thou mighty Queen, and cruel regent of all mankind, what have I done, that thou hast accused me, terrified me, and condemned me, which am innocent? O law thou hast no power over me, and therefore thou dost accuse and condemn me in vain, for I believe in the Son of God, whom the Father hath sent into the world, to redeem us miserable sinners, oppressed with the tyranny of the law. He gave his life and shed his blood for me; therefore feeling thy terrors and threatnings, O law, I plunge my conscience in the wounds, blood, death, resurrection and victory of my Saviour Christ. Besides him I will see nothing, I will hear nothing. O law, thou wouldest climb up into the kingdom of my conscience, and there reign and reprove it, of sin, and wouldest take from me the joy of my heart which I have by faith in Christ, and drive me to dispare, that I might be without all hope, and utterly perish. This thou dost beside thy office: keep thy self within thy bounds, and exercise thy power upon the flesh, but touch not my conscience, for I am baptized, and by the Gospel I am called to the partaking of righteousness and everlasting life, to the kingdom of Christ, wherein my conscience is at rest, where no law is, but altogether forgiveness of sins, peace, quietness, joy, health and everlasting life. Trouble me not in these matters, for I will not suffer thee, so intolerable a tyrant and cruel tormentor, to reign in my conscience: for it is the seat and temple of Christ the Son

of God, who is the King of righteousness and peace, and my most sweet Saviour and Mediator: he shall keep my conscience joyful and quiet in the sound and pure doctrine of the Gospel, and in the knowledge of this Christian and heavenly righteousness, in that righteousness and life I have no sin, no care, no sting of conscience, no fear of death. O law, thy tyranny can have no place in the throne where Christ my Lord sitteth: there I cannot hear thee, for I am free, and a son, who must not be subject to any bondage or law. Therefore when Christ is come, we ought to know nothing of the law, unless it be in this respect, that it hath power and dominion over the flesh, to bridle and keep it under. But when the law cometh to trouble thy conscience, thou must say, Lady law, thou comest not in season, for thou comest too soon, tarry yet until 430 years be expired, and when they are past, then come and spare not. But if thou comest then, yet shalt thou come too late. For then hath the promise prevented thee 430 years: to which I assent and sweetly repose myself in the same. Therefore I have nothing to do with thee; I hear thee not, for I live in Christ who hath abolished thee, O law! O law, thou accusest me and sayest, that I have committed many sins? Indeed I grant that I have committed many sins, yea, and do still commit sins daily without number. This toucheth me nothing: I am now deaf and cannot hear; therefore thou talkest to me in vain, for I am dead unto thee. But if thou wilt needs dispute with me as touching my sins, get thee to my flesh and members, crucify them, but trouble not me, nor my conscience, I say, which am a Lady and a Queen, and have nothing to do with thee, for I am dead to thee, and now I live to Christ, with whom I am under another law, viz. The law of grace, which ruleth over sin and the law. Therefore the law cannot accuse or condemn those that believe on Christ, Gal. v. 23. Indeed the law troubleth and terrifieth our consciences, but Christ apprehended by faith, vanquisheth it with all his terrors and threatnings. To them therefore the law is utterly abolished, and hath no more power to acccuse them: for they do that of their own accord which the law requireth. Christ apprehended by faith,

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secretly by his Spirit faith thus to the soul distressed: Dost thou see nothing but the law, sin, terror, heaviness, despair, death, hell and the devil? Is there not also grace remission of sins, righteousness, consolation, joy, peace, life, heaven, Christ and God? Trouble me no more, O my soul. What is the law? what is sin? what are all evils in comparison of these things? Trust in God who hath not spared his own dear Son, but hath given him to the death of the cross for thy sins, &c. Therefore when thou art beaten down, tormented and afflicted by the law, then say, Lady law, thou art not alone, neither art thou all things: but besides thee there are yet other things much greater and better than thou art, namely, grace, faith, and blessing, these do not accuse me, terrify me and condemn me, but they comfort me, and bid me trust in the Lord, and promise unto me victory and salvation in Christ. There is no cause therefore why I should despair. What therefore must I do? The law assailing and urging my conscience, especially when I perceive myself not to do that which it requireth? I answer, that which Christ doth here, who admitteth or acknowledgeth no law, although brought out of the law of God, so learn thou also to do, that thou mayest boldly say to the law, Leave off law to dispute with me, I have nothing to do with thee, and for that very same cause for which thou comest to dispute with me, and to enquire of me, how good and righteous I am, I will not hear thee: for it here maketh no matter what I am, or what I ought to do, and what not to do, but what Christ himself is, ought to do, and doth. For now we are in the bride-chamber, where only the bridegroom and bride must have to do, and it behoveth not thee to come thither, nor to intermeddle with any thing there. When he speaks of Satan, death and sin troubling the conscience, how triumphingly is it? saith he, Sir devil, I fear not thy threatnings and terrors, for there is one whose name is Jesus Christ, in whom I believe: he hath abolished the law, condemned sin, vanquished death, and destroyed hell; and he is thy tormentor, O Satan, for he hath bound thee, and holds thee captive, to the end that thou shouldest no more hurt me, or any

that believe in him. Therefore, Satan, thou ſhalt not prevail againſt me, in that thou goeſt about to terrify me, in ſetting forth the greatneſs of my ſins, and ſo to bring me into heavineſs, diſtruſt, deſpair, hatred, contempt, and blaſpheming of God. Yea rather, in that thou ſayeſt, I am a ſinner, thou giveſt me armour and weapon againſt thyſelf, that with thine own ſword, I may cut thy throat, and tread thee under my feet: for Chriſt died for ſinners, if I were righteous, and had no ſin, I ſhould have need of Chriſt to be my reconciler. Why then, O thou peeviſh holy Satan, wilt thou make me to be holy and ſeek righteouſneſs in my ſelf, when indeed I have nothing in me but ſins, and moſt grievous ſins, &c. This I know and more than thou canſt accuſe me of. Therefore whether thou lay my ſins before me, or my good works, I paſs not, but removing both far out of my ſight, I only reſt on Chriſt; I know him to be profitable unto me, therefore I will not make him unprofitable: which I ſhould do, if either I ſhould preſume to purchaſe to myſelf favour and everlaſting life by my good deeds, or ſhould diſpair of my ſalvation becauſe of my ſins. Alſo as often as thou objecteſt that I am a ſinner, thou calleſt to my remembrance the benfits of Chriſt my Redeemer, upon whoſe ſhoulders, and not upon mine own lie all my ſins. 'For 'the Lord hath laid all our iniquities upon him,' Iſa. liii. 6. Wherefore, when thou ſayeſt I am a ſinner, thou doſt not terrify me, but comfort me above meaſure; and the more vehement thou, O Satan, fighteſt againſt my conſcience, ſo much the ſtronger is my righteouſneſs made, I do the more ardently pray, and my faith is increaſed. Here I will abide in the arms of Chriſt, cleaving inſeparably about his neck, and creeping into his boſom, whatſoever the law ſhall ſay, and my heart ſhall feel. When I feel the terrors of death, I ſay thou haſt nothing to do with me, O death; for I have another death which killeth thee, and that death which killeth, is ſtronger than that which is killed, namely Chriſt, that hath ſlain both death and the devil, Heb. ii. 14. If death creep upon thee and attempt to devour thee, ſay unto it, Good miſtreſs death, doeſt thou know this

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man Christ? come and bit out his tooth, hast thou forgotten how little thy biting prevailed with him once? go to, if it be a pleasure unto thee, encounter with him again. Thou hast persuaded thyself that thou shouldst have prevailed somewhat against him, &c. thou didst bite indeed, but it turned worse to thyself, &c. altho' I am a sinner by the law, yet I die not because Christ liveth, who is both my righteousness and everlasting life, in that righteousness and life I have no sin, &c. When he read John xvi. 33. 'But be of good cheer, I have over-'come the world,' he breaks out into these words: A man could find in his heart to fetch such a sentence upon his knees from Rome or Jerusalem, how was he taken up into admiration with it. Oh! saith he (on Mat. iii. 17) nothing else was heard and seen but love, good will, and the infinite and incredible favour of God towards us; nothing but unmeasurable and bottomless goodness, and gentleness; all the whole vast heaven seemed not to distil drops, but to pour and rain down whole showers and floods of most sweet honey and sugar, &c. for this would God sound these words from heaven with his own voice, that he might persuade us certainly, and that we might fix it deeply in our minds, that in Christ, and for Christ his beloved Son, it is his will to load us with his benefits, &c. and embrace us as a Father most lovingly. Truly with no praises could Christ be more glorified, nor extolled more magnificently; for by this voice he is set in a most illustrious dignity, and high glory, he is proclaimed and declared the true King of peace, a true Priest, working perfect atonement, and the Heir and Lord of all things, who alone pacified his Father, and brings to pass, that he is well pleased with us. Moreover in these words, God the Father testifieth that he is of a right fatherly and well pleased mind to them that believe in Christ; to these he declares and opens himself wholly, and leaves it witnessed to our consciences that he is at perfect peace with us, &c. And on Mat. xi. 28. 'Come 'unto me,' &c. As tho' he said, Run and seek in what place soever ye will, hear and learn whatsoever can be preached unto you, yet shall ye find no quietness of heart, ye shall find no peace but in me alone. Here he

looketh for us, here he will receive us, here is the throne of grace and the true mercy seat, from which none is driven away, which with true faith resort unto it, but, here they that seek shall find, here they that ask shall be heard, here they that knock, the endless treasures of heaven shall be opened. Beware thou presume not to deal with God without me. Oh! creep into me, put on me, and so come and have whatsoever thou desirest, being wrapt, shrouded, and cloathed in the humanity of Christ, and so in Christ only thou hast access to the Father. When he advises against curious speculations of God, how sweet and safe is his advertisement, on Psalm cxxx. and in many other places. For this cause I so often admonish you, that without Christ you should shut your eyes, and stop your ears, and say *you know no God besides him which was in the lap of the virgin Mary, and suckt her breasts.* Where this God Christ Jesus is, there is God wholly, there is the whole divinity, there is the Father and the Holy Ghost. Without this Christ there is no God. I have known many in the kingdom of Antichrist, which seeking to comprehend God by man's speculations, have horribly perished And if God through his inestimable mercy had not delivered me from this temptation, I had also fallen headlong into destruction. The nature of God is higher than that we are able to attain unto it. Wherefore he hath humbled himself to us, and taken upon him that nature which is best kown, and most familiar unto us, viz. even our own, here he will receive us, &c. John vi. 'No man cometh to the Father but by me,' &c. Here is the mercy-seat and throne of grace that we may safely and comfortably conceive of God, and come to him, in, and by. For the nature of man is more frail, than that it should once conceive of God out of a Mediator; wherefore he hath given us this new and living way, that through the veil of Christ's flesh we may behold him, and in whom, and by whom, we must have to do with him. Hence it is that Turks, Jews, and others so grossly err, &c. and therefore they also that strive to come directly to God, do profit themselves nothing at all thereby, whilst thus they come to God in prayer without the Son, they which do here neglect him, as though

though he were made man for nought, and in the mean season do without a Mediator pray unto God, who hath created heaven and earth, they pray indeed, but none shall help them, they shall cry and none shall hear them. Therefore beware that thou presume not to deal with God, not once to conceive of him out of Christ, who is 'God-man, and blessed for ever,' Rom. ix. 5. When he speaks of the great article of Justification, on Psalm cxxx. and in many other places he saith, It is the chiefest point of our salvation and righteousness before God. The true and sincere knowledge whereof is it which maintaineth and preserveth the Church; for it is the knowledge of truth and life: but on the contrary, where the knowledge of our Justification is lost, there is no life, no church, no Christ, neither is there any judgment left, either of doctrine or of spirit, but all is full of horrible darkness and blindness. And on Gal. ii. 11. for he hath here no trifling matter in hand, but the chiefest article of all Christian doctrine. The usefulness and majesty whereof, who so rightly esteemeth to him all other things, shall seem but vile and nothing worth. For what is Peter? what is Paul? what is an Angel from heaven? what are all other creatures to the article of Justification? which if we know, then are we in the clear light: but if we be ignorant thereof, then are we in most miserable darkness. Wherefore if ye see this article impunged or defaced, fear not to resist Peter, or an Angel from heaven, &c. This doctrine bringeth with it all good things, as well spiritual as bodily, namely, forgiveness of sins, true righteousness, peace of conscience, and everlasting life. It approveth and establisheth civil government, household government, and all kinds of life that are ordained and appointed of God. It rooteth up all doctrines of errors, sedition, confusion, and such like: and putteth away the fear of sin and death, and to be short, it discovereth all the subtil slights and works of the devil, and openeth the benefits and love of God towards us in Christ. What means the world to hate this doctrine, and glad tidings of everlasting comfort, grace, salvation and eternal life, so bitterly, and to persecute it with such divilish outrage? accounting it the greatest

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plague that can befal them. I know that the devil goeth about nothing more, than that he may take away this knowledge from the ſight and minds of men, by buſying them with diſputations, that this article may be forgotten, or not ſo effectually be made uſe of, for he knows the force of it, and it is no wonder that Satan doth ſo ſtir him. By it he is overthrown, his kingdom is deſtroyed, the law, ſin, and death (wherewith as moſt mighty and invincible tyrants, he hath brought all mankind in ſubjection under his dominion) are wreſted out of his hands, and his priſoners are tranſlated out of the kingdom of darkneſs into the kingdom of light and liberty. Should the devil ſuffer all this? ſhould not the father of all lies employ all his force and ſubtil pollicies, to darken, to corrupt, and utterly to root out this doctrine of our ſalvation and eternal life? indeed St. Paul complained, that in his time the devil ſhewed himſelf a cunning workman in this buſineſs. This paſſive righteouſneſs, or Chriſtian Righteouſneſs, the righteouſneſs of faith is hidden in a myſtery, which the world doth not know, yea Chriſtians themſelves do not thoroughly underſtand it, and can hardly take hold of it in the time of temptation, therefore good Paſtors will be daily and continually handling this point, &c. for whoſo doth not underſtand and apprehend this righteouſneſs, muſt needs in afflictions and terrors of conſcience be overthrown, for there is no comfort of conſcience ſo firm and ſo ſure as this paſſive righteouſneſs that is apprehended by faith. And Mr. Fox ſaith of it, That unleſs the ſpecial grace of Chriſt do help, hard it is to fleſh and blood to comprehend this myſtical and joyful doctrine of Juſtification; ſo ſtrange it is to carnal reaſon, ſo dark to the world, ſo many enemies it hath, that except the Spirit of God from above do reveal it, learning cannot reach it, wiſdom is offended, nature is aſtoniſhed, devils do not know it, men perſecute it, briefly, as there is no way to life ſo eaſy, to whom it is given from above, ſo there is none ſo hard to the carnal ſenſe not inſpired, the ignorance whereof is the root of all the errors, ſects, and diviſions in the world. When he ſpeaks of the perverſe nature of man, he ſaith, There is nothing elſe in man but wicked-

wickedneſs, deluſion, guile, deceits, lying, fraud, and all kind of evil, yea by nature man is but lies and vanity. We muſt not truſt any man, in any thing do not perſuade thyſelf, that any man ſpeaketh the truth unto thee, for whatſoever man ſpeaketh is a lie. Why ſo? the fountain or ſpring head, the heart is no more ſincere, wherefore neither can the rivers be pure, &c. As ſoon as thou thinkeſt in thy mind, he is a good man, and one that will keep his promiſe, I am ſure that he will not deceive me, but will deal faithfully, even then haſt thou fallen from God and worſhipped an idol, putting thy truſt in a liar. Wherefore when thou haſt any dealing with man, think boldly: if he doth faithfully it is well, if he do otherwiſe, in the name of God let him go, and ſay, I will commit all things to the will of God, he ſhall proſperouſly bring them to paſs. O how often have we committed idolatry in this kind? When he ſpeaks of faith, and its three arms, how excellent is he in his Chriſtian liberty and elſewhere. He ſaith through faith every Chriſtian is advanced above all things, and in ſpiritual power he is even Lord over all, yet faith frees us not from good works, but from the wicked opinion of works, and that by faith we dwell in Chriſt, and in our neighbour by love, faith killeth reaſon, that beaſt and monſter in religion, that all the world cannot kill, &c. Faith even laugheth at all the iniquity, rage and fury of the world, and maketh that unto itſelf matter of ſpiritual joy, wherewith others are even killed, faith overcomes ſin, death and the fleſh, the world and the devil. Faith is that noble champion which overcometh and extinguiſheth every ſin, and if all the ſins which the whole world hath committed from the beginning, were laid upon an heap, it would extinguiſh and aboliſh them altogether: faith hath to do in great matters, it giveth glory to God, it believeth in him, it counteth him true, wiſe, righteous, merciful and Almighty, &c. Faith and the life of a Chriſtian is not hypocriſy, &c as their life is, which ſeek to come to perfection, by certain ſpeculations of ſpiritual union (as they call it) but altogether in vain, as I have proved by mine own experience, &c. But every

Chriſtian

Christian through his faith filleth heaven and earth, heaven with his faith, and earth with his works. Faith doth couple Christ and the Christian more near together, than the husband and his wife are united together. Faith makes us divine people (and as a man would say) it is the Creator of a certain divinity, not in the substance of God, but in us; for without faith, God loseth in us his glory, wisdom, righteousness, and mercy, &c. Faith in Christ is a treasure inestimable, containing in itself all salvation, and preserving from all evil, &c. Believe in Christ, in whom are promised unto thee grace, righteousness, peace, freedom, and in whom thou shalt have all things if thou believe, and without whom, thou shalt lake all things if thou dost not believe, for that which is impossible to thee in all the works of the law, thou shalt very easily and briefly atchieve, and bring to pass thro' faith; because God hath so established all things, in faith, that whosoever hath faith may possess all things, and whoso doth want faith do possess nothing. 'For 'God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might 'have mercy upon all,' Rom. xi. 32. That so all things may belong unto God only, as well the commandents as also the performance of the same, only God commandeth, only God performeth, therefore God's promises have relation to the New Testament itself. The first arm of faith is this. Forasmuch therefore as the promises of God be holy words, true, just, peaceable, and full of all goodness, it cometh to pass, that the soul which doth cleave stedfastly to the same, with an unshaken faith, is become so united unto them, yea is also so swallowed up of them, that it doth not only partake thereof, but is thoroughly satisfied and made drunken with all the power and force of the same; for if the touching of Christ did give health, how much more shall a very tender feeling of the word in the Spirit; nay rather a thorough swallowing down of the word, communicate to the soul all things that appertain to the word. By this means therefore the soul through faith only is justified, sanctified, pacified, delivered and repleniſhed with all goodness, and is truly made the daughter of God, John i. 12. By this it may easiiy be perceived from whence faith hath

hath received so great force, and why neither any one, nor all good works are comparable unto her, because no work can cleave fast unto God's word, nor be within the soul, wherein faith only, and the word do reign and govern, for such as the word is, such becometh the soul made by force of the word, even as a fiery plate of iron doth glimmer like unto fire, by means of uniting the fire and the plate together, so that it is manifest, that to a Christian man faith only sufficeth to Justification. Now if he needs no works, then also he needs not the law: if he have no need of the law, surely he is then free from the law. So this also is true, the law is not made for the righteous man, and this is that same Christian liberty our faith which doth work in us not to be idle, nor to give ourselves to lust and evil life, but that we be not tied to a necessity of observing the law, or doing words to the end to obtain righteousness or salvation thereby. The second arm of faith, it is to reverence him in whom we do believe, with a most godly and earnest bent affection, viz. that it account him true, and worthy to be believed, for there is no honour like unto the opinion conceived of truth and righteousness, wherewith we do most highly esteem of him we do believe, for what are we able to ascribe to any person, more than truth, righteousness, and goodness, of all parts perfect and absolute? on the contrary it is a detestable reproach to conceive a secret opinion of a man to be false, faithless and wicked. So the soul as long as it stedfastly believeth in God that maketh the promise, doth account him true and righteous, this is the highest honour to God, to ascribe unto him truth, justice, and whatsoever else ought to be yielded to him in whom we believe; this man is ready to execute all his will; this man doth sanctify his name; this man suffereth himself to be exercised according to the will and pleasure of God, because cleaving firmly to his promises, he doubteth not but that he is true, just, wise, and will do, dispose and govern all things for the best: but is not such a soul by the same (his faith) most humbly obedient to God in all things? what commandment remaineth then, that this obedience hath not sufficiently

ciently satisfied? what fulness can be more absolute? than all manner of humble obedience? but this obedience cometh not by works but by faith only, and believing the promises, on the other side, what rebellion? what impiety? what greater reproach can there be unto God, than not to believe him when he promiseth? for what is this else, than either to make God a liar, or be doubtful of his truth? to ascribe truth to himself, and condemn God of vanity and lying? wherein doth he not deny God and make to himself an image of himself in his own heart? what avail works in this unbelief, tho' they see me never so angelical and apostolical? and therefore very well did God conclude all (not in wrath and lust, but) in unbelief, lest such as feign that they have fulfilled the law through chast and meek works of the law, should presume upon their salvation, when as being shut up in the sin of unbelief, they must either seek for mercy, or be damned through justice, &c. The third arm of faith which is a jewel inestimable, is this, That it coupleth the soul with Christ, even as the spouse with her husband. By which sacrament (as Paul teacheth) Christ and the soul are made one flesh. If they be one flesh, then is there a true marriage betwixt them, yea, rather a marriage of all the most perfect, absolutely accomplished betwixt them, for marriages betwixt the man and wife, are but slender figures of this union. Whereupon it followeth, that all things are common betwixt them, as well good as bad, so that whatsoever Christ doth possess, the faithful soul may boldly presume upon the same, and triumph over them, as though they were his own. Likewise, whatsoever appertaineth to the soul, the same may Christ challenge unto himself as his own. Let us compare these two together, and we shall perceive inestimable treasure. Christ is full of all grace, life and saving health, the soul is full of all sin, death and damnation. Now let faith come between these two, and it shall come to pass that Christ shall be loaden with sin, with death and with hell, but unto the soul shall be imputed grace, life and salvation, for it behoveth Christ to accept, and jointly possess the things appertaining to his spouse, and withal to communicate

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to his ſpouſe the things that appertain to his poſſeſſion, for he that giveth to her his body, and himſelf wholly, how can it be but that he muſt give her all things elſe withal; and he that is poſſeſſed of the ſpouſe, how doth he not withal poſſeſs alſo the things pertaining to the ſpouſe; here cometh low to the view, a moſt ſweet ſpectacle, not only of communion, but of a comfortable battle, of victory, of ſalvation, and redemption. For, inaſmuch as Chriſt is God and man, and ſuch a perſon as never yet ſinned, never dieth, nor is damn'd: Yea ſuch a one as neither can ſin, nor die, nor be damn'd, and that his juſtice, his life, his ſaving health is unvanquiſhable, everlaſting and omnipotent, when as ſuch a perſon doth communicate to himſelf, yea rather doth wed the ſin, death, and damnation of his ſpouſe, through the union of faith. And that the caſe now ſtandeth none otherwiſe, than as if they were his own proper peculiar, even as if himſelf had ſinned, were travelling dying and deſcending into hell, to bring all things into ſubjection, and that ſin, death, and hell, could not ſwallow him, being of all neceſſity, clean ſwallowed up in him, by a miraculous conflict, for his righteouſneſs is greater than the ſins of all men, his life ſurmounteth in power, all death, his ſaving health, is more victorious than all hell. Even ſo, the faithful ſoul, through the aſſurance of her faith, in Chriſt her huſband, is delivered from all ſins, made ſafe from death, guarded from hell, and endued with everlaſting righteouſneſs, life, and ſaving health, of her huſband Chriſt; on this wiſe Chriſt doth couple her to himſelf, a glorious ſpouſe without ſpot or wrinkle, cleanſing her with the fountain in the word of life, through faith in the word of life, of righteouſneſs, and of ſalvation. Even ſo doth he marry her unto himſelf, in faith, in mercy and compaſſion, in juſtice and judgment, Hoſ. ii. 19. When his friends perſuaded him from going to Worms, leſt they ſhould burn him as they did John Hus, how little did he fear the rage of man, ſo firm was his faith, that he ſaid, That if he knew there were ſo many devils in Worms as tiles on the houſes, (in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt) I will go thither. Neither ſhall any kind of

death

death or perſecution ſhake my confidence. Oh! what faith and courage had he? when others were almoſt at their wits end for fear of the Pope and Emperor's rage, and threatned wars, Luther was ſo far from being daunted, that he brake out to the admiration of them all, ſaying, Come let's ſing the xlvi. Pſalm, and then let all the devils in hell do their worſt, ſo ſtrong was his faith in Chriſt his refuge, rock, and ſtrong tower. When he ſpeaks of himſelf, Oh! how diſreſpectfully it is, a ſack of Worms meat, O wretch that I am! a lump of earth, a bundle of wickedneſs, an unworthy miniſter of the goſpel. When of his marriage ſo cried down by Papiſts, if my marriage be a work of God, what wonder is it, if the fleſh be offended at it? it is offended even at the fleſh which God our Crearor took, and gave to be a ranſom and food for the ſalvation of the world, if the world were not offended with me, I ſhould be offended with it, and ſhould fear that it was not of God which I have done. Now ſeeing the world is vexed and troubled at it, I am confirmed in my courſe, and comforted in God. When a prodigious lie was raiſed on him by a libel of his death, and how the devils had carried away his body, &c. with an hypocritical admonition to take heed of his doctrine, &c. and ſpread abroad two years before his death by the wicked Papiſts: Luther read it, and thanked God that the devil and his inſtruments were ſuch fools that they could not ſtay until he were dead, and ſubſcribed, I Martin Luther do profeſs and witneſs under mine own hand, that I on the 21ſt of March 1544, received this figment (ſo little did he regard this egregious lie) full of anger and fury, concerning my death, and that I read it with a joyful countenance, and that but I deteſt the blaſphemy which aſcribeth an impudent lie to the Divine Majeſty. For the other paſſages, I cannot but with great joy of heart laugh at Satan's, the Pope's, and their accomplices hatred againſt me, God turn their hearts from their diabolical maliciouſneſs. But if God have decreed not to hear my prayer for their ſin unto death, then God grant that they may fill up the meaſure of their ſins, and ſolace themſelves to the full with their libels full of ſuch like

like lies. When he was kept in Coburg-caſtle, that the Pope and Emperor might not murder him, being baniſhed, he wrote to Melancthon and told him, That if I perceive that the cauſe goeth not well with you (it was at Auſburg aſſembly) or be endangered, I ſhall not contain myſelf, but ſhall come with ſpeed unto you, that I may ſee the ghaſtly jaws of Satan's teeth, if the cauſe be faulty, let us revoke it, and fly back, if it be good, why do we make God a liar, &c. But I am reſolute and ſecure for the public cauſe, becauſe I am ſure that it is juſt and true, that it is God's and Chriſt's cauſe, &c. When he ſpake to God, how confidently was it? I know thou art a father and our God, I know therefore aſſuredly, that thou wilt deſtroy the perſecutors, &c. Lord God maker of the whole world, I am certain that I am holy before thee, and am thy ſervant, not for my own ſake, who as yet feel ſin in myſelf, but through Chriſt who hath taken away my ſin, and made ſatisfaction for me, &c. And at his death, what confidence had he in his prayer. O heavenly Father, my gracious God! and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, thou God of all conſolation, I give thee hearty thanks that thou haſt revealed to me thy Son Jeſus Chriſt, whom I believe, whom I poſſeſs, whom I love, whom I glorify, I beſeech thee, Lord Jeſus Chriſt to receive my ſoul. O! my gracious heavenly Father, though I be taken out of this life, though I muſt lay down this frail body, yet I certainly know that I ſhall live with thee eternally, and that I cannot be taken out of thy hand. 'Into thine hand I 'commit my ſpirit: thou haſt redeemed me, O Lord 'God of truth.' Farewel.

SERMON I.

On the Nativity of Christ.

Luke ii. 1. to the 14. *And it came to pass in those days, &c.*

1. AS the Evangelist here describeth the time and place of the nativity of Christ, first herein is required faith of us, viz. That we believe this to be the same Christ, of whom these things be recorded. Moreover the house and stock of David is here notified and shewed forth, whereof our Messias should rise. 2. The shepherds which are here mentioned, are the first fruits of those Jews, which come unto Christ, as the wise men from the East are the first fruits of the Gentiles, and the innocent infants of all them, which must bear the Cross for Christ's sake. 3. Whereas the angel of the Lord appeareth to the shepherds in great glory, it signifieth, that the gospel cometh unto men with the glory of God. First, indeed it maketh us afraid for it condemneth our darkness and whatsoever is in us, until we hear the comfort, which is here declared unto the shepherds in these comfortable words: 'Fear not, 'for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which 'shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day, a 'Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.' 4. Also, as one angel first preacheth unto the shepherds, that noteth to us the prince of all preachers Christ himself. Secondly, whereas many angels are gathered together, it signifieth the multitude of preachers, who all say with one mouth, Glory be to God and peace unto men. 5. The fruit and profit wherefore Christ took flesh upon him, is here expressed to be evangelical peace and good will to men, whereof the hymn of the angels makes mention; 'Glo-'ry be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will 'towards men.'

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Ye have often times heard this history before, and must hear it still both this year, and every year, though to sluggish and drowsy Christians, that are soon weary and cloyed with good things, the same peradventure may seem tedious. But to them that are endued with true faith, it always cometh again as new. For the holy Ghost can speak so diversly of one thing, that to them which be his, it always seemeth new. Moreover we might speak at large of this history, for it is very full of matter, if we should not want time, and if it were not perilous lest we should somewhere stray from the purpose: nevertheless we will speak somewhat thereof, as God shall permit. Ye have already heard in the text, how the angel himself expresseth all this history, giving us to understand, that the same is published for our cause: and that the fruit thereof doth redound and appertain to us only, and is wrought to our salvation. And therefore the angel speaking to the shepherds, saith in these words; 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of 'great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is 'born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is 'Christ the Lord.' Here is declared first, that his nativity doth pertain unto us, when he saith, 'Unto you is 'born a Saviour.' For the Lord Christ came not for his own cause only, but that he might help and succour us. Wherefore let us diligently endeavour, that we believe the angel, and we shall enjoy the whole benefit. I have heretofore oftentimes said, that the gospel preacheth nothing else but faith, that the angel also here doth, and this must all preachers do, otherwise they be no true ministers. For the angel was here a beginning and example to all preachers. Now we must in this place speak of a double nativity, namely of our own and of Christ's. But before I begin to treat hereof, I will handle the history briefly, that ye may lay it up in your heart, and may be partakers of the joy which the angel here bringeth. First therefore the Evangelist saith, 'And it came to pass in those 'days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus 'that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was 'first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all 'went to be taxed every one into his own city.' Ye know

right well, that the Jews had a promise made of the patriarch Jacob, that a prince, lawgiver or ruler, of the house of Judah, should not be wanting in Judea, until the Messias which was promised them did come. For the words of Jacob to Judah are plain after this sort: 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-'giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come,' Gen. xlix. 10. now at this time the case was so that the Romans possessed Judea, and had set a lieutenant over it, whom the Evangelist here calleth Cyrenius. The Jews before for a long time had used priests for kings, when as the Maccabees had obtained the kingdom, so that the dominion of the house of Judah was already taken away and suppressed, neither was there any prince or ruler, of the stock and blood of Judah, governor over the people. But that Christ or the Messias should now come, that was a great sign, that the prophesy at that time especially might be fulfilled. Wherefore the Evangelist saith here, that at the time when Christ was born, Augustus Cæsar had set a lieutenant over Judea, under whom the Jews should offer themselves to be taxed. As if he had said, Even at that time at which he should be born, he is born. All that lived under the Roman emperor were compelled to pay tax, for a testimony that they were subject unto him. This the Jews knew, but they did not understand the prophesy. Jacob had said thus, 'The sceptre shall not 'depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his 'feet, until Shiloh come:' that is, a Prince and ruler of the stock of Judah shall not be wanting in Judea, until Christ come. Jacob did sufficiently shew in these words, that he should be wanting at the coming of Christ. Moreover they understood it so, as though such a Shiloh should come, as should bear rule with the sword, it is a false understanding thereof, neither can it be gathered out of that text. For he saith thus, that at the coming of Christ the temporal kingdom of the Jews should end. So Luke also here sheweth that every time, when it behoved this to be done. It followeth moreover in the text: 'And Joseph 'also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth 'into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Beth-'lehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David)

to

' to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great ' with child.' Joseph also and Mary obeyed this commandment of Cæsar, and submitted themselves as other honest and obedient men, and went to Bethlehem, which was the chief and head city of the house of Judah, and suffered themselves to be taxed. Mary, in as much as she was with child, and near her delivery, might have excused herself, that she should not take this journey upon her, but she doth not so, they will not be an offence to others. Moreover it ought thus to be that they should come to Bethlehem, because of the prophesy of the prophet Micah, chap. v. which foretold that Christ should be born in Bethlehem of Judah. Mark I pray you, how that tax must serve hereunto, which neither Cæsar nor his lieutenant did know. Thus God dealeth in his works in which he useth the means of heathen and evil men, whereby he may make us, which are miserable and wretched men and so deeply drowned in flesh and blood, certain of our faith, which the evangelist Luke here specially fetteth forth, inasmuch as he often declareth in the history, the places and times, least that we should be deceived concerning this Christ. The manner of his birth the Evangelist sheweth, saying: ' And so it was, that ' while they were there, the days were accomplished, that ' she should be delivered: and she brought forth her first ' born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid ' him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the ' inn.' Let it nothing move us, or be any offence unto us, that the Lord came into the world in so great poverty and misery. For it ought to be, a great joy and comfort unto us, rather than in any wise to discomfort and discourage us. It may seem a strange thing and hard dealing that a virgin which was new married, and that year joined to her husband, might not be permitted to bring forth her child at Nazareth in her own house, but was forced in poor estate to go almost three days journey being great with child? and when she came at her journey's end, she had not so much room in the inn as that she might be delivered in some parlour or chamber. The inn being full there was none that would vouchsafe to give place to this woman being great with child, that

she might have the use of their chamber, but she was enforced to go into a stable, that there she might bring forth the Creator of all creatures, here may be plainly perceived what is the knowledge and wisdom of the world concerning divine matters, namely, that it is blind, and vain in understanding, that it seeth not the works of God, and if it be so that it seeth them, that it knoweth not what they mean. From hence let us learn, not to be moved or discouraged, if we be poor and miserable, and forsaken of the world, for we have here great comfort. If Christ the maker of all things with his beloved mother, was cast into so great misery and so contemned of the world, why may not the same also come unto us? or why should not we being in misery, and compassed about with all calamities, bear them patiently, yea, if God will at any time kill us with adversity and distress? but this thing is to be lamented, that we exclude such an example from our eyes, but much farther from our heart, we should easily suffer adversity and contempt if it be so that we believed, and had a sure trust and confidence in God, as we see that the Lord Christ suffered this misery, poverty, and calamity. This is therefore first throughly to be marked and considered of us, how Christ came into the world in so great poverty, and found not so much as one in so great a city, which was dutiful and beneficial toward him. Thus this nativity was received in the earth, over which notwithstanding all the heavenly host did exceedingly rejoice, as it followeth: 'And there were in the same country shepherds abiding 'in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 'And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the 'glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were 'sore afraid.' Here is declared, how God in heaven, setteth forth this nativity, which the world contemneth, yea, knoweth not neither seeth. This joy is so great in heaven, that it cannot be contained therein, but bursteth forth, that it may be declared and communicated to the world. For the Angel here bringeth tidings of great joy to the shepherds, which to them is great comfort, which the world notwithstanding contemneth and rejecteth, but is of the Angels had in great admiration, yea and

if they might, they would with greater praises, and goodly pomp have set forth so wonderful a thing. But it was not meet it should be so. For God would set an example in this his Son, than the ostentation and glorying of the world might at the last be neglected, and that it might be known what the world is. Man's reason seemeth always very wise unto itself, it always looketh unto things that are aloft, it considereth only high matters, it humbleth not itself to those things that are below. This now is an excellent comfort, that the angels and all the heavenly host esteem him so much, whom the world contemneth, by which we may learn that altho' we be outcasts in the world, there be notwithstanding that have regard and care of us. However we do hardly believe this, we do not fasten our eyes thereupon, but look unto great precious, and high things, according to the example of the world, and are dismayed, as soon as a little misfortune cometh, neither thinking nor knowing, if any adversity assaileth us, that it is done by the will of God. Believe thou this undoubtedly, if it had not so pleased God, he would not have suffered this his beloved son to be laid in a manger, he would not have permitted him to be born in so great poverty, misery, and contempt. But the poorer and more despised he is before the world, so much greater care and regard God and all the heavenly soldiers have of him, so that we may conceive comfort thereby, and believe assuredly, that the more we are rejected of the world, the more we are esteemed before God. Thou mayest find many which here think thus, and are touched with such devotion as this: O! if I had been there then, with how great diligence would I have served this child, and done for him: yea, I would have washed even his swaddling clothes. O! if I had been so happy as the shepherds, that I also might have seen the Lord lying in a manger. Now, indeed, thou wouldest be ready to do those duties, when thou knowest Christ to be so high and noble. Surely thou wouldest have been as slack in thy duty, at that time, as the citizens of Bethlehem were. Thou resolvest in thy mind childish and altogether foolish cogitations. Why dost thou not

perform the like duties now? Behold Christ walking before thee in thy neighbour, do for him, and bestow benefits upon him; whatsoever thou shalt bestow upon thy neighbour, which is needy and destitute of help, that thou shalt bestow upon Christ himself, as he shall say in the last day, to the elect, Mat. xxv. 40. 'In as much as 'ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye 'have done it unto me.' Wherefore it is a vain and very foolish to admit such childish cogitations. Let us therefore at the last open our eyes, let us not hear examples of so great importance in vain, otherwise the time will come, when we shall be grievously punished. But with what words did the angel speak unto the shepherds? the Evangelist saith after this sort: 'And the angel said unto 'them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of 'great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born 'this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ 'the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find 'the babe wrapped in swaddling cloths lying in a manger.' Learn by these words of the angel, how to use rightly the nativity of the Lord Christ; neither let it suffice you, to hear them only. A great treasure hidden in the earth, or some other where, is of no use, but if it be opened, and occupied, then it is profitable and precious. Wherefore give heed hereunto, that thou mayest use this nativity; otherwise, it shall be no advantage or comfort unto thee. For as thou knowest the bare history only, viz. what came to pass in his nativity, and that he was born needy and poor, thou shalt learn no greater use hereby, than if thou heard an history written of the king of France, or of some other puissant prince, whereby no advantage or comfort should come unto thee: but how must we use this nativity rightly, and with fruit? Even as I have said, if we be thus persuaded that he was born for us, that his nativity is ours. Our nativity is such, that it altogether aboundeth with sin, as David saith, Psal li. 'Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in 'sin did my mother conceive me.' As if he would say, Here is nothing but sin, as well in the conception as in the birth; whatsoever I bring with me from my mother's womb, it is wholly damnable, it is due to death,

Satan,

Satan, and hell: Foraſmuch then as our nativity, ſkin and hair, are defiled, What good can come thereof? This is our title which we have received from Adam, in this one thing we may glory, and in nothing elſe, namely, that every infant that is born into this world, is wholly in the power of ſin, death, Satan, hell, and eternal damnation; our nativity is altogether miſerable, and on every ſide to be lamented. To deliver us from this nativity, God ſent another nativity, which it behoved to be pure and without ſpot, that it might make this unclean and ſinful nativity pure: This is that nativity of the Lord Chriſt, his only begotten ſon. Wherefore he would not have him born of fleſh and blood, infected with ſin; but it behoved that he ſhould be born of a pure virgin. He ſuffered no ſpot at all nor ſin in his fleſh, but repleniſhed it with the Holy Ghoſt; and permitted nothing to ſtick therein, but thoſe miſeries which proceed of fleſh and blood, as hunger, thriſt, adverſity and death, ſin excepted, as the epiſtle to the Heb. chap. iv. witneſſeth, that he 'was in all points tempted like as 'we are, yet without ſin.' This is that moſt excellent thing, which the Lord our God hath done for us; whereof none taketh any fruit, but he that believeth. And none will eaſily believe this, but he that feeleth of what ſort his own nativity is: He that hath no feeling of his own miſery, taſteth not of this nativity of Chriſt. But if we feel our miſery, it followeth forthworth, that we cry with the prophet David, and ſay, 'Behold I was 'ſhapen in wickedneſs, and in ſin hath my mother conceived 'me:' For we feel our ſin, and our evil nativity. When death ſhall come upon us, and our heart ſhall be touched with anguiſh and grief, then at the laſt, it may be that we would taſte of this happy and pure nativity, and will exceedingly thriſt after it, to enjoy it. But now when as we feel not our ſins, neither do as yet taſte of the bitterneſs of ſin, it ſlideth coldly to the heart, we hear it indeed, but truly it doth not throughly enter unto the heart. For if a man did believe, that this nativity was for his advantage, he would fear neither ſin nor death. Wherefore I have ſaid, that a Chriſtian muſt believe, and doubt nothing that the nativity of Chriſt

is

is as well his, as it is the Lord Christ's: and as he hath of the virgin pure blood and flesh, so that he himself also is pure: and that this virgin is his mother spiritually, as she was the mother of Christ carnally. Let the heart have sure confidence in this persuasion, otherwise it will be in an evil case. This the Angel signifieth in these words, when he sayeth, Unto you HE is born; as if he had said, Whatsoever he is and hath, ye may challenge it to yourselves. Also he is your Saviour, not that ye should only look upon him, but which is able to deliver you from the tyranny of sin, death, Satan, and all evil; yea, and how great soever he be, he is 'born unto you,' and is yours, with all that he hath. Now forasmuch as he is mine, and hath changed his nativity into mine, his flesh and blood also is mine, he himself is mine, with all wherewith he is endued, so that I dare say unto his mother, Behold, that child which thou hast brought forth is mine, his flesh and blood are my flesh and blood, yea, and thou art my mother, and I will be counted of thee for thy son; for whatsoever Christ bringeth with him, it must be mine, even as he himself is mine: if so be that his nativity is mine, being of a virgin, and without sin, replenished with the holy Ghost, my nativity also must be of a virgin, and pure from sin. Here now Eve the first mother is no more my mother, for it must needs be that that nativity utterly die and perish, that there may be no sin remaining. Here this mother Mary is to be set against that mother, of whom I was born in sin. And thus the Angel bringeth with him great joy, for it cannot be, but that the heart should be made glad, when it enjoyeth this Saviour as his own. When we come to hand strokes, that is, when we feel our misery and calamity, there remaineth no comfort or help; then my heart cannot lift itself above the heavy burden, wherewith it is pressed down, but it must faint and be discouraged: but if I conceive a trust, and doubt nothing that Christ's nativity is mine, that my sins are taken away by him, I become exceeding joyful, and am confirmed with comfort, whereby all heaviness and sorrow is shaken off. This only is that comfort, and no other which maketh a good conscience; which feareth neither death

nor

nor hell, for it always resteth upon the word of God, which giveth Christ unto us: wherefore it is a thing altogether miserable and lamentable, if such a good conscience be sought in any other things than here. Thou shalt find no joy, no peace of conscience, neither in heaven, nor in earth, but in this Christ; be thou certain and sure thereof. Wherefore let all other things pass, and cleave unto him only, if thou desirest to be bold and couragious against sin, death, the devil, hell, and all things that are against thee: he is the Lord and Saviour. Ye understand, I trust, this right well, forasmuch as ye have now heard it so often. But I do with so great earnestness, as it were, beat it into your minds, that ye may see, that there is but one thing taught in the whole scripture, which I would have to stick firmly and undoubtedly in you; this is that which I have said, that the use of this nativity be known. They which seek any other thing, and use not this nativity, are in a desperate case, as ye have heard; which ye have very well expressed in this song, the author whereof, whosoever he was, did nothing err from the purpose, viz. that the only child Christ is our comfort; which words surely are of very great importance, and deserve most diligently to be weighed. For ye sung after this sort; A child, highly to be praised, is born unto you this day, of a chaste virgin, to the comfort of us wretches. If that child had not been born, we had perished all. Is it not said here, that there is no comfort beside only Christ? which indeed is most true. Without doubt the Holy Ghost taught him that made this song, to sing after this sort. If the case stands thus, it followeth that monks, nuns, sacrificing priests, and all which leave this child, and seek to come to heaven by other ways and works, be condemned; for such say, that they need not this child, otherwise they would confess, that their own works are nothing worth. These therefore do nothing but deceive and seduce, by whom men's hearts are procured to depart from Christ, and are led away unto Satan. In the aforesaid song is contained moreover, He is the salvation of us all; oh! sweet Jesus Christ, forasmuch as thou art born man, defend us from hell. I

greatly desire that ye did well understand this; it is sung abroad every where, but there is none that thoroughly believeth it. Whereupon it cometh, that some do oppose these things, especially they, which know, sing and babble very much of them; that truly I fear, that Christ is never more blasphemed, than at this feast of his nativity, and at other great feasts; that it should be no marvel, if, when he is so blasphemed, he should suffer the whole world to be swallowed up: But the last day is at hand. Wherefore endeavour that ye may sound this excellent song in your heart; and as ye sing it in mouth, so ye may also believe it. If the case stands thus, that all things without this child are vain, what need is there then of much business? why dost thou run this way and that way, and endeavourest to do works, whereby thou mayest prepare thee a seat in heaven? which they especially do, that murmur over many rosaries, and continually extol the mother of God in mouth only, but in heart think more evil of her than of all others; and not only of her, but of Christ himself also, the Lord and Saviour. Wherefore commit this so to memory that ye may be certainly persuaded, that whatsoever dependeth of any other than of that child, it is all damnable; otherwise the Angel had lied. This must be accounted for most certain, without any addition; neither are these trifles to be weighed, viz. that this sufficeth not that thou dost believe, more things are to be added. Forasmuch then as the Angel saith, that this Child doth all, and that he is the Saviour; and if he be not, that all labour is lost; tell me, how can it follow, that something is to be done of thee, when it is already done before? Dost thou go about to do any thing that thou mayest obtain him? That Child suffereth not himself to be apprehended and obtained by works; for altho' thou heapest together works, notwithstanding thou dost not yet enjoy the Child. Moreover thy works be unclean, by which such great treasure cannot be gotten, no though they were even holy. But he is to be apprehended in heart, so that thou believe, and say to the Angel, I believe that it is true which thou sayest, and nothing at all doubting, I count this Child for a Saviour

born

born unto me. And this part, whereof we have now spoken, pertaineth to faith. Now we have here also another part, pertaining to Christian life, namely, charity, that works may not be rejected. If thou wilt do works, do them not in that respect, that thou persuade thyself that thou dost obtain any thing of God by them: But follow this example; such a one as Christ hath shewed himself to thee, be thou also toward thy neighbour. If thou more nearly consider the example of Christ, thou shalt find nothing but meer love; whereas he humbleth himself, and is born in so great poverty, that declareth nothing but love toward thee, which moved him to become a servant for thy sake, as Paul, Phil. ii. saith, who knew that he might remain in divine glory. Now this he did for thy advantage, he bowed his eyes to thy misery and calamity, which are so miserable a man, wholly damnable, and abounding with sin; thy nativity is unclean, thy misery is on every side most great, thou hast deserved nothing but the wrath of God, and eternal damnation. If thou hadst been a Carthusian monk a thousand years, thou couldst not deliver thyself from this misery and damnation. But Christ is able to help thee, he is rich, and hath strength sufficient; seeing therefore he can do such things, he doth them willingly and with pleasure. Love enforceth him so far, that he employs all things for thy sake, and bestows whatsoever he hath for thee. Forasmuch then as Christ sheweth so great love toward thee, and giveth unto thee whatsoever he is able, do thou likewise to thy neighbour. Wilt thou work works, derive them to thy neighbour, who is compassed with troubles and miseries. Thou must do nothing for this cause, that Christ hath need thereof, whereby thou mayest enrich them; for neither was he bountiful to this end, that he might any thing profit his Father thereby, or that he might receive any benefit of him; but he did it only for this cause, that therein the Father might be well pleased, inasmuch as he submitted himself wholly to his Father's will, and loveth us with so great affection: After the same sort we also must do in our works toward our neighbour, which we ought therefore only to do, that we may give thanks to the

Father,

Father, that he ſheweth his favour unto us, for that he hath given his beloved Son unto me, to beſtow upon me whatſoever he hath. When I believe this undoubtedly, I burſt out and ſay, If God ſheweth unto me ſuch benefits and favour in his beloved Son, that he ſuffereth him to beſtow all things upon me, I alſo will do the like again, and beſtow all things whereby I may do good to my neighbour, and love him. And ſo I do not lift up mine eyes unto heaven, but I go thither, where my neighbour is oppreſſed with adverſity, poverty, ſickneſs, ſin or error, and I help him wherein ſoever I am able. Thus do thou, whoſoever thou art, which mindeſt to do true good works; as thou wouldſt have done to thyſelf, if thou wert troubled with poverty, ſo do thou to thy neighbour being poor. Again, if thy neighbour be a ſinner, and thou ſeeſt it, but thou thyſelf art without ſin, and haſt a holy nativity, go preach unto him, whereby he alſo may be delivered. But thou muſt do all theſe things freely in every reſpect, as Chriſt hath done for thee without all works and merits of pure grace, love, and mercy. Such work ſee thou do if thou wilt do good and Chriſtian works indeed. God hath no need of them, nevertheleſs thou muſt do them in reſpect of him, inaſmuch as it ſo pleaſeth him, and he will have it to be ſo. This only is rightly to do good works, which thoſe hypocrites do not, which will merit heaven by their chaſtity, poverty, and obedience. Unto whom I pray you are ſuch works of theirs good? I myſelf need them not, neither do they profit my neighbour, wherefore it is meer deceit, whereas a name is given to works as though they did merit heaven; when as they are nothing worth, neither profitable to others. Lay up theſe things in your hearts, and do alſo according to them. In all this text being diſcuſſed from the beginning to the ending, ye have theſe two things, namely faith and love. If ye ſhall keep theſe, then both the holy nativity of Chriſt ſhall be a help, and comfort unto you, and alſo ye ſhall be ſpiritually the children of his mother, as Chriſt Jeſus is her child carnally. [An expoſition of the ſong of the Angels, glory be to God on high, &c.] 'Glory be to God on high, and on earth, peace, good

'will

'will towards men.' Forasmuch as this song is very common, and there be few that rightly understand it, notwithstanding it containeth many things, I think good to handle it somewhat at large. The Angels in this hymn apply three things to three: Glory to God, peace to the earth, and good will unto men. The first is the honour or glory of God, with which we must begin, that in all things praise and glory may be ascribed to God, as to him which doeth, giveth, and hath all things, so that none may challenge any good thing unto himself, neither ought to count it his own. Glory is so due to God only, that no part thereof may be derived to any other. Adam being persuaded of Satan, went about to take this glory to himself, whereby all men fell into the displeasure of God, and have that vice so throughly fixed in their mind, that nothing can be so hardly pluckt away from them. Every man pleaseth himself, no man can bear to seem that he is nothing, or is able to do nothing, whereof come almost all evils, so many contentions, wars, and innumberable other inconveniences. This glory Christ gave to God his Father, teaching that all our things are nothing before God but sin, which deserve his wrath and indignation. Wherefore there is no cause, that we should even never so little please ourselves or glory in them, but rather that we should be ashamed and fear, being set in so great peril and confusion, that so all our glory and pleasing of ourselves may pass away and come to nothing, and we may rejoice being destitute of our own glory, that we may be found and saved in Christ alone. The second is peace in earth; for, as where the glory of God is not, and where every one seeketh his own glory, there cannot be peace, according as Solomon saith Prov.xiii.20. 'Only by pride cometh contention:' on the contrary, where the glory of God is known, there true peace also must needs be. For why should they contend? why should they disagree, which know every one of them, that they have no good thing of their own, but that all things which are, which they have, and which they are able to do, come from God, to whose power also they commit all things, in the mean

season

season being very well content, that they have God favourable unto them? how also can it be, that when one counteth nothing of himself, and the things that be his, he should be so careful of himself and his things, that he should move contention with any because of them? such believe that Christ only is made all things unto them, him they think on, and for him alone they contend. Hereupon it certainly followeth, that there can be no contention or discord at all among true Christians; which manner of peace of Christians Isaiah declareth, and saith, ch. xi. 9. 'They shall not hurt nor 'destroy in all my holy mountain;' that is, in the church of Christ. The cause hereof he addeth next after, 'for 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,' that is, for all know God as to whom all good things do belong, and all their own things they confess to be nothing but sin, they may easily therefore have peace among themselves. Wherefore the same Isaiah saith, chap. ii. 4. 'And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke 'many people: and they shall beat their swords into 'plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: na-'tion shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall 'they learn war any more.' Hereupon Christ is called the King of peace, or the Prince of peace, of whom Solomon was a figure, who is called peaceable. For Christ is truly called our King Solomon, that is, peaceable, which hath restored peace unto us inwardly with God thro' faith in him, and outwardly with our neighbours thro' love, whereby we live friendly with all men; and so by him we have peace every where both inwardly, and outwardly in the earth.

The third is good will of men. Not that good will, whereby we work good works, but whereby we take in good part all things that happen, whether they be good or evil, sweet or sour, and receive them with a quiet heart. The Angels knew that the peace which they sung of, should be only among Christians, which in all things depend upon Christ, and usurp nothing themselves as their own. But in the mean season the world and Satan, which exceedingly envy them, do on every side procure trouble unto them, and persecute them

them even unto death, so that they may look for no peace or quietness at all, for Christ saith, John xvi. 'In 'me ye shall have peace, but in the world ye shall have 'tribulation.' Therefore it was not enough for the angels to have sung, Peace on earth, but it was to be added, And good will towards men, that when they, as much as they are able, have peace with all men, and nevertheless are continually hated of all men, and suffer persecution, they may always keep a good will whereby they may take all things in good part, and give thanks to God, however he dealeth with them, or suffereth them to be dealt with, they may not murmur, but resign and commit themselves wholly to the will of God, yea, (forasmuch as they know that God disposes and governs all things, whom they are sure, that they have a merciful and most favourable Father unto them through Christ) they may even rejoice and be glad in persecution, according to that saying of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans: 'We rejoice in afflictions and persecutions.' For inasmuch as they have a joyful conscience and a sure trust of the favour of God, they cannot but count all things for the best, whatsoever happen. Behold what kind of good will it is in all things, whether they be prosperous or unprosperous, which the angels here wish unto men, and sing, to be proper to the believers. Where such good will is wanting, there peace cannot belong. Men take all things in the worse, they take nothing in good part, but always encrease and double the evil. Hereupon howsoever God dealeth with them, they like it not, but require that they may be dealt otherwise with, and so it falleth out, as in Psal. xviii. 'With the pure thou wilt 'shew thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt 'shew thyself froward,' that is with him that counteth all things pure to himself, and hath that good will in all things, whereof we have spoken, thou also doest well agree, as he pleaseth thee and all good men. But he that is froward, so that neither thou, nor those things that are thine like him, cannot but displease both thee and all good men. Of this well-pleasing one another Paul speaketh, 1 Cor. x. 'Endeavour to please all men, 'even as I please all.' By what means shall this be done?

if thou take all things in good part, and suffer others to please thee, thou also shalt please others. The matter may be comprehended in one word: if thou wilt be liked of none, nothing shall be liked of thee: if thou wilt be liked of all, suffer that all things may be also liked of thee, but so, that thou do not neglect the word of the Lord. For that ought to be preferred before all, without any regard had of all men, what pleaseth them, or what displeaseth them. But whatsoever may be done without transgressing the word of God, give place to all, and submit thy judgment to the judgment of others, that thou mayest take every thing in good part, which shall chance unto thee, and so thou shalt have the good will, whereof the Angels sung. By this song may be understood, what nature the Angels have. I omit those things which the Philosophers have dreamed hereof; here is so described what the Angels are, that it cannot be more fully done, their heart and cogitations being declared. First with great joy they sing praises to God, acknowledging all things to be due unto him, and therefore with an ardent mind, sing and glorify him. As therefore thou wouldest think of a right lowly, pure, and obedient heart, praising God, and always enjoying perpetual gladness in him, so think also of the Angels; and thou hast now the nature of Angels, as much as they have to do with God. The second thing to be considered in them is their love towards us. Think that they are most loving towards us, which desire that it may go as well with us as with themselves, they do no less rejoice for our safety than for their own, and even in this hymn full of love towards us, they declare themselves so affected towards us, that surely, we may think and rejoice of them, as of most loving friends. This is to know the Angels truly, not according to their essence, whereof the Philosophers foolishly and without fruit spake many things, not according to their heart and mind, so that altho' I know not, what their nature is in itself, yet I know what is their chief desire, and their continual work. Thus much shall suffice at this time concerning the song of the Angels, and the fruit of the nativity of the child Jesu

Jesus Christ. God grant us his grace, that we may print these things in our heart, and according unto them also amend our life. *Amen.*

SERMON II.

On the Epiphany, or appearing of Christ.

Matth. ii. 1. to the 11. *Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, &c.*

WE celebrate this day a noble, and most comfortable feast, concerning the appearing of the Lord Jesus, who appeared a special comfort to all them which seek him with a strong faith: First, to the wise men which came from the East: Secondly, to John the Baptist, when being about thirty years of age he was baptized of him in Jordan, and the Holy Ghost and voice of the Father gave testimony of him, that he is the Son of God: Thirdly, when he shewed his glory and power in a miracle, wherein he turned water into wine at a marriage, whereby he would procure reverence and estimation to matrimony, which now, alas, is after a shameful sort torn, contemned, and rejected of the Pope and his adherents as a certain miserable and wretched state. For whatsoever God hath ordained, that of the world is contemned: whereof at convenient time we will speak more, and we have already as I think written sufficient thereof. Now we will speak in few words of the first appearance.

The wise men of Arabia, which were industrious men, and without all doubt governors of that country (as it was that time the manner in those parts) when they had seen the star in the East, breaking off all delay, made haste to Jerusalem, dilligently seeking for the King of the Jews being new born. Where we ought to mark that they could neither seek nor find out this King, the Lord Christ, but by the star going before them, which at the last led them so far, that by the word of God they

were certified, where this king was to be found. So also it is with us: we cannot find Christ without the Gospel, without the word of God; that must shew him unto us, and bring us thither where we may find him; which is only done, when we receive the same Gospel by faith, otherwise, although we have it, hear it, and know it, it profiteth us nothing, we shall not therefore find him, no more than he Scribes found him, who notwithstanding they had the Scriptures readily, and shewed the way to others not coming into it themselves, for the thing did not touch their hearts; they did drousily neglect that King, whom with great sighs they had looked for many ages. Wherefore it is not enough that we have the Gospel, or that we hear it, but we must believe it, and lay it up in the secrets of our heart, otherwise we shall never find Christ. Here also you see, that it doth not skill, whether one be learned or unlearned, instructed in many places of Scripture, or in few, unto whom God giveth grace, he enjoyeth Christ. He respecteth not the person, but whom he draweth he is drawn, although in the mean season he provideth that the Gospel be always preached. After therefore that these wise men had found the child Christ, the King of the Jews at Bethlehem, together with Joseph and Mary, by the shewing of the Scripture and guiding of the star, they were not offended at the poor estate of the Child, but being taught by the word, acknowledged that Child for the Messias and King of the Jews, whom the Jews had looked for so many years, and opened their treasures, before him, offering unto him gold, frankincense and myrrh. Wherein again we ought to mark the nature of faith, that is offended at nothing, but cleaveth to the word only, and not esteem those things that shine outwardly. These wise men did not therefore disdain, neither turned back, because the Child, together with his parents, were without pomp, in poverty and misery, and nothing less than a kingly child appeareth unto them, but they go on, and undoubtedly acknowledge him for a King, as they had learned concerning him out of the Scriptures. Moreover they give unto him the honour meet for a King, they offer most

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precious gifts, which they had brought, being even of the best sort, out of their own country. Now the world would have done no such thing, but according to the manner thereof, would have looked for garments of purple, and resort of servants, and handmaidens. In such places it is wont to bestow his gifts, viz. where there is great plenty and abundance before: yet it is of that quality, that it depriveth the poor and afflicted of those things that they have, it taketh bread out of the mouth of the hungry and needy, which have nothing, but as they get it hardly, by labouring all that they are able. Whereof we learn, that if we will honour Christ with these wise men, we must shut our eyes, and turn them from all that which seemeth fair, goodly and noble before the world: neither must thou be offended or abhor it, if any thing seem vile, contemptible and ridiculous unto the world: let this suffice that thou knowest that it pleaseth God, which is in heaven. Take heed unto thyself concerning these things, which shine before the world. exercise thyself in those works, which seemeth unto reason foolish and light, as are, to help the needy, to comfort the afflicted, and to count the calamity of thy neighbour thine own. If thou shalt be diligently exercised in these, and faith being thy guide, shalt endeavour rightly to apply thyself, unto them, then other works which have a fair shew, as to institute masses, to be occupied in vigils, to build temples, and such like follies, shall be pluckt out of thy heart and vanish away, unto which works, almost the whole world is addicted; they are indeed fair in outward shew; and seem to be very precious, notwithstanding they are an abomination unto God. But whatsoever God hath commanded, as to do good to our neighbour, and to be touched with his adversities no less than with our own, to bear a friendly and willing mind toward him, these are neglected, and in the eyes of the world appear trifling and foolish; whereupon we greatly abhor them. How cometh this to pass? even because they have no goodly shew outwardly. And the common people of Germany are wont to say, That which shineth not, nor hath not a fair shew, is nothing set by. Moreover God doth sooner

ſuffer himſelf to want his own honour and due ſervice, than he would have us to leave off doing our duty toward our neighbour as Chriſt witneſſeth, Mat. v. 23, 24. "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Here you moſt plainly both here and ſee, that God will nor be ſerved, unleſs we firſt go to our neighbour, and be reconciled to him. For the ſame cauſe alſo God rejecteth the ſacrifices of the Jews, as it is in the propheſy of Iſaiah, chap. i. for they that neglected thoſe things which were more neceſſary, namely, mercy and faith: for thus he ſaith: "To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices unto me? ſaith the Lord: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beaſts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations, incenſe is an abomination unto me, the new moons and ſabbaths, the calling of aſſemblies, I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the ſolemn meeting. Your new moons, and your appointed feaſts my ſoul hateth: they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. And when ye ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Waſh ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow," &c. as is there rehearſed in Iſaiah. By theſe words you ſee what God requireth and what he alloweth. When we neglect theſe works, by which our neighbour is ſerved, he will neglect us. For whatſoever benefit we beſtow upon our neighbour, that we beſtow upon God and Chriſt himſelf, as he ſhall pronounce in the laſt judgment; Mat. xxv. 40. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have done it unto me." When thou heareſt this, thou wilt not glory much of the temples which thou haſt built, or maſſes which thou haſt founded. For then he will ſay, what have I

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to do with thy temples and masses? what with thine altar and bells? thinkest thou that I am delighted with stones and wood, with bells and banners? are not all things mine first? heaven is my seat, and the earth is my footstool. Who commanded thee to build temples? I have set living temples before thee, these are to be edified, nourished, and relieved, but thou hast been occupied with other trifles, which I have not commanded; I know thee not, away with thy temples and masses: ye ought to have put your trust in me only, but all your delight consisted in such works, as though it had been your purpose to wrest heaven from me, and that I may comprehend all in a brief sum: whatsoever I have commanded, that have you neglected; and whatsoever I have detested and abhorred, that you have diligently done; this therefore I will requite you with again. I know you not, you may resort unto that God which hath commanded you to do these things. Hence therefore let us learn, how the wise men did not abhor the poor and on every side miserable appearance of this infant and his parents, that we also may be so affected toward the miserable and pitiful estate of our neighbours, and may be persuaded that we find Christ in them, and that whatsoever is bestowed upon them, Christ doth acknowledge it as bestowed upon himself. His Kingdom consisteth in the poor, despised and abject, yea, in the holy cross, in contempt, in persecution, in affliction and misery, as St. Paul saith out of the Psalms: Psal. xliv. 22. 'Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the 'day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.' In another place also he saith, 1 Cor. iv. 13. 'We are made 'as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all 'things.' Wherefore Christ said to his disciples, when he sent them forth to preach in Judea, 'Behold I send you 'forth as sheep in the midst of wolves,' Mat. x. 16. They now that seek Christ any other than in such a contemptible form in the cross, and in persecution, do not find him. The wise men find the King Christ being newly born, not in Herod's court, not among the Princes and Priests, not at Jerusalem, in so noble and famous a city, but at Bethlehem in a stable, with poor and despised crea-

tures, namely Joseph and Mary. In sum Christ will there be found, where a man would least seek for him. We must diligently consider also, what these wise men signified by their gifts. For assuredly they shewed by them, that this child is a King, and not a king only, but also God, and man. In offering gold they acknowledged him for a King, as if they would say, we bring unto thee gold, not that we would thereby enrich thee. For gold, silver, and whatsoever is made is thine before, but hereby we acknowledge thee to be a most mighty King over all things. So we also offer gold unto Christ, when we acknowledge him for our King and Lord: but unto this is required a very strong faith. For if I ought to acknowledge him for my King and Lord, all mine own will must be extinguished, that it reign not in me: for Christ only must reign and rule in me, that he may do whatsoever it pleaseth him in me, and concerning me, all things must be committed unto him. So the leper in Matthew did which said unto Christ: 'Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.' Therefore my will must be utterly extinguished in me, if that I will have Christ to reign in me. Christ also suffered not his own will to rule, but he always submitted himself to the will of his Father, which he testifieth in the sixth Chapter of the Gospel of St. John ver. 38. 'For I 'came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the 'will of him that sent me.' Yea he obeyed his father even unto death, and submitted himself wholly to his will. We imitating this example, which is written for our singular consolation, ought to submit our will to God and his Christ, and to rest confidently upon him. He knoweth how to bring the matter to pass, as it is said, Psal. xxxvii. 5. 'Commit thy way unto the Lord: 'trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.' And a little after, 'Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him.' Such sentences ought to provoke us, patiently to suffer the will of God in us, whether sweet things or sour, commodities or discommodities come unto us: for he knoweth with what temperance to lay them upon us. Blessed is he that believeth these things from his heart. Who being such an one can be troubled with sorrow?

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ſuch a man howſoever he be handled, whether he be burned or drowned, caſt into priſon, or otherwiſe grievouſly dealt with, he taketh all in good part; for he knoweth that theſe things ſhall turn to his advantage. After this ſort we alſo offer gold with the wiſe men, when we take away rule from our own will, and ſuffer Chriſt to work in us according to his will and pleaſure. Wherefore they are hypocrites which know not to ſuffer the will of God, but howſoever he dealeth with them, have always complaints. They, forſooth, ſuppoſe, that whatſoever they think, it ſhall have ſucceſs according to their thinking. If it fall out otherwiſe, they are angry, they do not patiently ſuffer perſecution and contempt: they murmer, they find fault, and vex when thoſe things happen, like horſes ſtirred up with fury or rage. So therefore by reſiſting they ſtay the kingdom of Chriſt from them, and deprive Chriſt of gold, which notwithſtanding they ought to offer and preſent unto him, that is, they themſelves will bear rule, and do not vouchſafe to acknowledge Chriſt for their King and Lord. By frankincenſe they reſembled divine honour, which we offer unto him, when we confeſs, that whatſoever we have, we muſt acknowledge to have come from God, and that we have it freely, and without any merit of ours; therefore all theſe things are to be aſcribed unto him, as to the true Lord, neither muſt we glory in the good things received, but his glory is to be ſought in them. And if he take them from us again, we ought to ſuffer him with quiet minds, and to bleſs him with the beloved Job in thoſe words: 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and 'naked ſhall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord 'hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the Lord,' Job i. 21. And ſo we ought to ſuffer all misfortunes and adverſities, as if God himſelf caſt them upon our neck, ſo that none ſhall be able to offend us, unleſs he take away Chriſt from us. Not ſo much as a hair of our head ſhall periſh, as Chriſt ſaith to his diſciples, Luke xxi. Wherefore whatever ſhall moleſt us, what adverſity ſoever ſhall come unto us, we ought never to ſeek any other God we ought no where to ſeek any other help and comfort, than of Chriſt alone. This is he which

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is made unto us of God the Father, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Then only we offer unto Christ that right frankincense of Arabia, when we fly unto him alone in our calamities, afflictions, and anguishes. But they that seek after strange helps and comforts, as of sorcerers, witches, and such like, they do not offer frankincense unto Christ, but stinking brimstone, wherein they shall be burned for ever, for that they have not believed and trusted in Christ. By myrrh they signified a mortal man: for with myrrh dead bodies were anointed, that for certain years they should not putrify. Now myrrh is a strong and bitter juice, which distilleth from the trees of Arabia, like unto gum, or as with us rosin issueth out of the pin tree, and fir tree, &c. But then we offer myrrh unto Christ, when we firmly believe that he by his death hath overcome sin, Satan, and hell. And this is a special faith. If we but a little doubt here, it is not well with us. But if I believe from my heart, that death, sin, the the devil, and hell are swallowed up in and by the death of Christ, I shall not be afraid of them all. I shall easily be preserved from rottenes which death bringeth, when I have myrrh, that is, the death of my Lord Christ in my body and soul, this will not suffer me to perish So strong and vailiant a thing is faith, unto which even all things are possible, as Christ saith, Mark ix. Here must we learn daily with our Lord Christ to bring under our old Adam, and to mortify his concupiscences, by the cross and temptations, not that cross which we choose, but which Christ layeth on us, let us bear it patiently and with a willing mind, that so our body may be subdued, and made subject to the Spirit, that being so buried with Christ through baptism, we may be raised up again with him, and he alone may reign and live in us. Hereunto sighing is required, which the Holy Ghost maketh in us for our sake, as St. Paul saith, Rom. viii. that Christ will help us, to keep under this unruly and obstinate flesh, that it presume not too licentiously, and thrust the noble soul into the mire. This our baptism doth signify, viz. that old and stinking Adam be mortified and buried, which we ought always

ways to revolve in our mind, seeing that as long as we live here, sin doth remain in us. Wherefore always something must be repaired in us without all intermission, thro' the cogitation of baptism, as it were in a house decayed thro' coldness even until such time as we depart this life. Whereof St. Paul treateth in very good words, Rom. vi. 3 which are diligently to be marked of us, he saith thus: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death: we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead, is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus much concerning the first appearance. Now we will speak somewhat of the second, that is of the baptism of Christ. In the baptism of Christ three things are to be considered: The first, that the heavens were opened when he was baptized. The second, that the holy Ghost was seen in the likeness of a Dove. The third, that the voice of the Father was heard, which said: 'This is 'my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.' As Christ vouchsafed to be baptized with water, he hath hallowed baptism, and made the water thereof holy, that he which is baptized in his name, might become likewise holy and clean from sin, and might have the heavens open. Now Christ was not baptized for himself, for he was not infected with the spot of any sin, as St. Peter saith, 1 Pet. ii. He behaved himself like unto a good Physician, which before the sick doth first drink some bitter potion, that the sick may more gladly and boldly do the same afterward.

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For we in baptism drink a bitter potion, namely, the mortification of the old Adam, which with the bitterness thereof doth greatly trouble us. For that diping into the water or sprinkling with it doth signify nothing else, but that that old Adam should perish and die. This is greatly furthered by the cross, which God according to his divine will layeth upon us, which we ought not to cast from us, but bear it willingly and with a patient mind. But that this might be easier for us to do, even Christ hath taken it upon himself, he suffered himself to be baptized, and took his cross and carried it not resisting or gainsaying, and so was obedient to his Father unto the death, even the death of the cross, as Paul saith, Phil. ii. that he might deliver us from sin, and might again appease his heavenly Father, which he did of his meer grace without any desert of ours: whereof we have baptism a sign and pledge, as Paul saith unto Titus: 'But, after 'that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward 'man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we 'have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by 'the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy 'Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, thro' Jesus 'Christ our Saviour: that being justified by his grace, 'we should be made heirs according to the hope of e-'ternal life.' Secondly, the Holy Ghost appeared here in the likeness of a dove, when Christ is baptized, whereby is signified that we also receive the Holy Ghost in our baptism, which ruleth and guideth us according to the will of God, which is present with us, and helpeth us in bearing the burthen of the holy cross, which exhorteth us, is instant upon us, enforceth us, and when we yield to the burthen of the cross, is present and helpeth us: if we fall, raiseth us up again and is with us as a certain faithful companion in our journey. He also maketh the burthen of the cross light, which we were very unable to bear; if he did not put his help. If so be that thou fall into sin, remember to go back unto thy baptism, for this is the only ship, wherein we pass over. Wherefore take heed of them which make two tables, whereby we pass over the sea of sin, namely baptism and repentance, believe them not, whatsoever they handle, it is meer delusion:

baptism

baptiſm is the beginning of repentance. As often then e-fore as thou falleſt into ſin, have recourſe unto thy baptiſm, there thou ſhalt again obtain the Holy Ghoſt, who may be preſent with thee: For repentance is nothing elſe, but a diſpleaſing of himſelf, a deteſting of his wicked life, and renewing of the man, which is repreſented in baptiſm. After ſuch a renewing of the life followeth the praiſe of God and thankſgiving unto him for the grace received, then ſuch a man burſts forth, and behaveth himſelf friendly towards his neighbour, and doth good to him in all things. This is ſignified by the Holy Ghoſt appearing upon Chriſt in the likeneſs of a dove: for a dove wanteth the gall. Such they alſo become, which receive the Holy Ghoſt in baptiſm, viz. they are gentle and without all bitterneſs towards all. Thirdly, the voice of the Father is heard, in the baptiſm of Chriſt: which ſaith: 'This is my beloved Son in whom 'I am well pleaſed.' This is that Saviour, which delivereth us from the tyranny of ſin, death, Satan and hell. Hence we may learn, how we muſt come unto God. He that deſireth to be the gracious and dear child of God the Father, muſt attain unto this through Chriſt, through him alone the beloved Son, who ſitteth in the boſom of his Father: unto whom alone the Father looketh, without whom he alloweth nothing, and whatſoever pleaſeth the Father, it pleaſeth him in reſpect of this his Son. Therefore he that deſireth to go to the Father, muſt cleave to this beloved Son, muſt lay himſelf upon his back. For by this voice all titles albiet they ſeem very goodly and holy, are taken away, nothing is of value or eſtimation with the Father but only this his beloved Son, he is in his ſpecial favour. Now he that deſireth to be in favour with the Father, and to be beloved of him, let him flie into the boſom of the Son, by whom he findeth acceſs to the Father, as St. Paul ſaith Epheſ. i. that through Chriſt we are adopted, without this Chriſt we are the enemies of God. Whoſoever therefore cleaveth to Chriſt through faith, he abideth in the favour of God, he alſo ſhall be made beloved and acceptable, as Chriſt is, and ſhall have fellowſhip with the Father and the Son. But where this is not done,

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there is nothing but wrath, there is no honesty, no virtue, no free will, neither prayer, nor fasting, nor other works shall profit, thou shalt but trifle with all these. For this is a most mighty and most excellent voice: This is my beloved Son, in whom all things consist and are comprehended, which are extant in the whole Scripture. Even as all things are delivered into the hands of Christ, and gathered into one, that they may obey him, as St. Paul saith: for when God saith, 'This is my beloved Son,' by shewing Christ only, and shewing and naming no other, he maketh it plain enough, that none is his beloved Son beside him. If so be that others are not beloved Sons, it is certain that they are the children of wrath and indignation. For if there were more beloved sons, He would not so set forth and shew this Son alone, saying: 'This is my beloved Son,' neither would turn his eyes unto him only, and glory of him alone, as though he knew no other. For the words seem to shew, that he diligently looked about, and yet found none, beside him, of whom saith: This is he, as if he had said: Here at the last I have found such a one as pleaseth me, and is my beloved Son, all other generally are not such. Moreover, these words are not so only to be understood, that it is shewed by them that Christ is very God, as the epistle to the Hebrews saith: 'For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art 'my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will 'be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?' &c. For it is most certain that Christ in these words is declared to be the true and natural Son of God, seeing that this word was never said to any creature. Howbeit he had been as well the Son of God, and had so remained for ever, as he hath been from everlasting, although this had not been spoken unto us from heaven, neither is any thing added or taken away from him by this name, but we must thus think and persuade ourselves, that so excellent a praise, and so noble honour of Christ was spoken for our cause. For he himself witnesseth in John, xii. 30. 'This voice came not because of me, but for 'your sakes' He hath no need that it should be said unto him, that he is the Son of God. He knew this before,

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and hath from everlasting and by his nature, that which he heareth. Wherefore when that is conceived by voice and word, it pertaineth to us and not unto Christ. Christ without the word, is such as he is said to be. Wehave the word without him, of whom it is spoken. Wherefore we must lay fast hold upon the word without the essence, even as he hath the essence without the word. But what doth this word? it teacheth us to know Christ, in which knowledge our salvation consisteth, as Isaiah, Paul and Peter witness. But how doth it teach us to know him? so, that he is the Son of God, and doth especially please God his Father, by which words God cheereth the hearts of all the faithful, and greatly delighteth them with meer comfort, and heavenly sweetness. How is this done? When I know, and am sure, that this man Christ is the Son of God, and doth in all things please the Father, whereof I must be most fully persuaded: forasmuch as the divine Majesty confirmed this by his voice from heaven, which cannot lie, whereby I am certain, that whatsoever that man doth speak and work, they are the meer words and works of the beloved Son, which are above measure approved of God. This therefore I singularly well mark, and lay up in the bottom of my heart. When I hear Christ speak, or see him do any thing and that for my advantage, which surely he every where doth, (for he saith, that he doth, and suffereth all things for us, that he came to serve and not that he should be served) then I remember these words of the Father, that he is the beloved Son, then I am enforced to think, that all that Christ speaketh doth and suffereth, and that for my sake, doth singularly well please God. Now how can God pour out himself more liberally, or shew himself more lovingly and sweetly than by saying, that it doth please him from the heart, that Christ his Son doth speak so gently with me, doth with so great affection look unto my advantage, and with such unusual love, suffer, die and do whatsoever for my sake. Dost thou doubt, that if man's heart did with due sense feel such favour of God in Christ, viz. that he doth so much for our sakes, it would not for joy burst into pieces? for then it would look into the depth of the di-

vine

vine breaſt, yea, and into the exceeding and eternal goodneſs and love of God, which he beareth towards us, and hath born towards us from everlaſting. But we are too hard-hearted and cold, the fleſh doth ly more heavy upon us, than that we are able to comprehend ſuch words, we do not well conſider them with ourſelves, neither doth our heart come near to feel what marvellous and unſpeakable love and joy they contain in them, otherwiſe without doubt we ſhould perceive, that heaven and earth are full of the fire of the divine love, of life and righteouſneſs, full of honour and praiſe, whereunto the fire of hell, ſin and death being compared, are nothing but as it were a thing painted or pictured. But we are cold, ſluggiſh, and unthankful wretches, for we paſs over ſuch precious words, as things of no importance, and as uttered of man, as being contained in a book, or written in paper as things utterly decayed, and now long ſince grown out of uſe by long cuſtom, as though they pertain only to Chriſt, and to us. And being dull and ſenſeleſs, we do not ſee that they belong not to Chriſt, but were committed to writing and are extant only for our ſake. Seeing therefore that Chriſt the beloved Son being in ſo great favour with God in all things that he doth, is thine, and doth in the ſame, ſerve thee, as he himſelf witneſſeth, without doubt thou art in the ſame favour and love of God that Chriſt himſelf is in. And again, the favour and love of God are inſinuated to thee as deeply, as to Chriſt, that now God together with his beloved Son doth wholly poſſeſs thee, and thou haſt him again wholly, that ſo God, Chriſt, and thou doſt become as one certain thing. Hereunto make many ſentences of the goſpel, but eſpecially in John, as this: 'If a man love 'me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love 'him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode 'with him, John xiv. 23. Alſo, And where I am, there 'ſhall alſo my ſervant be, John xii. 26. Again, That they 'all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee; 'That they alſo may be one in us: that the world may 'believe that Thou haſt ſent me,' John xvii. 21. But where is Chriſt? In the favour of God, in the depth of his heart, there alſo are we, if ſo be that we know and

love

love Christ, there I think we are safe enough, there our refuge is placed high enough, whither no evil can come, as it is in the xci. Psalm. But thou seest that faith is required, and that unto these things no law, no work, no merit doth prevail. Hence it cometh to pass, that so precious words are so abstruse and unknown unto reason. For it hath been governed by Satan from the creation of the world, when as in paradise it would be as God, and presumed after honour, which God here attributeth to Christ alone, as he is his Son, whereunto it is yet also prone and inclined, and setteth itself against these words, and the words again are against it. For because Christ is here declared the only Son of God, it is mightily overthrown, whatsoever maketh itself God. But who be they that make themselves God? surely Satan and man, which please themselves, and love themselves, they seek not after God, but strive to attain unto this, that they also may become Gods. But what will God say unto these: truly a certain contrary thing, to that which he said unto Christ. Christ is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, seeing that he glorifieth not himself, and maketh not himself God altho' he is God. But ye are wretches, in whom I allow nothing, seeing that ye glorify yourselves, and make yourselves Gods, altho' ye are creatures and men, and not God. So this sentence given of Christ doth humble the whole world, doth shew them to be all void of divinity, and ascribeth it to Christ, and that all for our use, if we will admit this sentence: or to our condemnation, if we will not; so that I may say at once, without Christ there is no favour, nor any beloved son, but very wrath and sore displeasure of God.

Certain sentences out of the Scripture, concerning Christ, wherein is declared, that thro' him we are loved of the Father, and without him are refused.

John i. 16, 17. "Of his fulness, (viz. Christ's) have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John iii. 13. No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man

which is in heaven. John iii. 16, 17, 18. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world thro' him might be saved. He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John iii. 35, 36. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John vi. 40. This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. John vii. 37, 38. In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Titus iii. 4, 5, 6, 7. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Many other such sentences there be, especially out of the epistles of Paul, which every one may gather by himself.

SERMON

SERMON III.

On the Genealogy, or Pedigree of Christ.

Matth. i. 1. to the 16. *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, &c.*

1. MATTHEW beginneth his book with a title or inscription, by which the believer is provoked with greater pleasure to hear and read it. For he saith thus much in effect: Whom the law and prophets have hitherto promised and preached, Jesus, that is, a Saviour, and Christ, that is an eternal king; that he, according to the promise of God, should spring and come of the seed of Abraham and David, even him do I describe in this book, viz. that he is now born, and made man, and already come into the world. This I handle thro' this whole book. 2. Three lines or degrees are here rehearsed. In the first is contained the stock of the fathers, in the second of the kings, in the third is contained the decaying stock of David; after the decay whereof, it behoved that Christ should come. For so the goodness of God is wont to do, when all things seem even past hope and recovery, then at the last he cometh. 3. Matthew ommitted one in his rehearsal, but that maketh no matter, seeing that he observeth this one thing, that he counteth by the right line from David, by Solomon, to Joseph the husband of Mary. Luke counteth otherwise, and useth another order.

When Adam our first father, having fallen by a great offence, was guilty of death, with all his children, as well in body as in soul, it was notwithstanding promised unto him, although obscurely, that both he and his posterity should be delivered, in those words, which God spake to the serpent, Gen. iii. 15. 'I will put enmity 'between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her 'seed: it shall bruise thy head.' Of these words Adam took

comfort, that a woman should come, by whose fruit such guile and subtility of the serpent should be amended, and Adam redeemed: this comfort upheld Adam, with his posterity, until Noah; for then the promise was renewed, when God made a covenant with the sons of Noah, and set the rainbow for a sign of the covenant, whereby men might conceive a trust and confidence, that God is yet favourable unto them, and doth not purpose their destruction; whereby mankind was again upheld and comforted, even until Abraham.

In the time of Abraham God did somewhat shew forth his mercy, he declared that he would send a Saviour, who should deliver us again from death, both of body and soul; for altho' the body should die, yet it should not always remain in death, but rise again with the Lord Christ: the words which God spake to Abraham, Gen. xxii. are thus, 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the 'earth be blessed.' Here miserable men had a cause to hope and look for a Saviour, which should deliver them. From that time all the prophets did diversly fortel of this above measure flowing fountain of all mercy, that is, of this seed, of the Lord Christ, how that he at the last should come, that all which believed in him, might obtain salvation by that promise which cannot be revoked. If men would now open their eyes, they must needs confess and say, that a strange and incredible thing is done with us; that man being in the state of damnation, cursed, and desperate, should be restored by the nativity of one man. Hereupon the prophets cried out with ardent prayers and unspeakable groaning, that God would vouchsafe to send the Saviour whom he had promised. By faith in this Saviour the Israelites afterward obtained the law, and this honour before all people, that they were called the elect people of God. By which ordinances, written of Moses, the anointed was plainly figured and signified, whom this text which we have now in hand, setteth forth; what he is, from whence he is, and by faith all obtained salvation, from Abraham unto David, even as many as were saved. In the time of David God made the coming of the Messias to be more manifestly declared, that it might be certainly

tainly known of what stock he should come, namely, of the stock of David, as when God said unto David, 2 Sam. vii. 12. 'When thy days be fulfilled, and thou 'shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after 'thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I 'will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house 'for my name, and I will establish the throne of his king-'dom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my 'son.' And yet more plainly in Psal. cxxxii. 11. 'The 'Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn 'from it, Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy 'throne.' Here Christ is described, that he shall be a king, and an eternal king, as it is mentioned of him in another Psalm; Psal. xlv. 6. 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and 'ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.' Howbeit he is a spiritual king, which ruleth the world by his word; and whosoever receiveth his word, pertaineth to his kingdom; but he that is not under this sceptre, neither heareth his word, is not of God, neither pertaineth to his kingdom, but is subject to the kingdom of Satan, under whose tyranny we all are, until the Lord doth deliver us from it, and defend us with his sceptre, which is then done when we believe in him. Forasmuch therefore as our salvation doth come meerly by the promise of God, let every one assuredly persuade himself, that he shall never obtain salvation without this promise; although he should do the works of all saints, yet they should profit him nothing hereunto. On the contrary, if we lay hold on the sceptre of this king, that is, of the promise of God, we shall not perish, although the sins of the whole world should lie upon us; they shall be all swallowed up in him, notwithstanding no good work be done of us; as we see in the thief which hung by the Lord on the cross, who laid hold on the word of God, and believed in Christ, and therefore he obtained the promised paradise. Here is no doubt left, let us only believe that it is so, and it is so inpeed; all things which men teach, or which we have done or can do, being set aside. Here all things must give place, at the coming of this new King, that he alone may rule and reign in us. Let a man intermeddle with those things

that are written of this King, as being his own matters and as pertaining all unto him; for whatsoever is written any where of Christ, it is written for our comfort, that we may thereby feed and cherish our faith. To the establishing such faith, God hath mercifully left unto us his promise written, and hath suffered to be published, that he will perform that which he hath promised. Whosoever apprehendeth this in his heart, it must needs be that with sighing he thirst for such scripture and promise of God, who of his grace being not provoked of us, offereth unto us, and bestoweth upon us such goodness and mercy. But let us now come to our present text, which not with words only, but also with a certain force pierceth the heart, and poureth into it love, pleasure, joy, gladness, &c. as if an Angel should now come from heaven, and say unto us miserable and condemned wretches, after this manner: Behold, O man, thou hast sinned, wherefore thou hast deserved to be condemned for ever: (this being heard, the heart must needs tremble) Now although all this be true, yet nevertheless God of his grace hath mercy upon thee, and sendeth to thee a Saviour, as he promised to Abraham, and his seed; be of good cheer, and give thanks to God, lo! here is the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, who is the son of David, the son of Abraham, so that this is not only done, but also written, that thou mayest be certain thereof; neither will he, neither can he deceive, believe only, and thou shalt have all things. Now it is to be noted, that Matthew setteth David before Abraham, although the promise was first made to Abraham, and came afterward to David; which promise made to David, the prophets afterward published more abroad, and did by it comfort the people, as in the 11th chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet saith thus; 'There shall come 'forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall 'grow out of his roots.' Jeremiah likewise saith thus, ch. xxiii. 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I 'will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall 'reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice 'in the earth.' And many other such prophesies there are to be found in the writings of the prophets, which foretold

foretold of David, that his kingdom should be raised up; as the Angel also declared unto Mary, when he said, Luke i. 32. 'The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of 'his father David, and he shall reign over the house of 'Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' Wherefore Matthew thought good here to set David first, as the better known, and next unto him, Abraham, unto whom the promise was first made, as Mary in her song saith, Luke i. 54. 'He hath holpen his servant Israel, in 'remembrance of his mercy, as he spake to our fathers, to 'Abraham, and to his seed for ever.' And that promise is now performed, and in this our text described, as we shall see hereafter. St. Matthew maketh a triple difference of fathers, of whom Christ came, fourteen patriarchs, fourteen kings, and fourteen princes. For it behoved that the sceptre and kingdom should be taken from Judah, according to the prophesy of Jacob, which is thus, Gen. xlix. 10. 'The sceptre shall not depart from Ju-'dah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh 'come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.' Here all things must be fulfilled; and there are thrice fourteen generations, even as Matthew rehearsed them: From Abraham to David fourteen generations, from David till they were carried away into Babylon, likewise fourteen generations. However, there is a person omitted in Matthew, that is, Jakim; and it ought thus to be written: Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jeconias and his brethren; this the Chronicles witness. And after they were carried away into Babylon, until Christ, fourteen generations. Which triple distinction hath a great mystery, as we shall see. The Jews, among other laws, were commanded to observe these three precepts, namely to worship that God whom their fathers had worshipped; secondly, to chuse no priest of any other stock than of their own, that is, of the tribe of Levi; thirdly, to chuse no king but of their own people. These three precepts did very well agree in our Lord Christ, viz. that he is that one God, that he is an eternal Priest, of our flesh and blood, and a King, our brother, who hath taken our nature upon him; who by his divine power is able to help and save us, and

being an eternal Priest, continually maketh intercession for us; he is a King also, that he may defend and preserve us, who is not to be feared of us, since he is a man as we are, yea, and was made a most contemptible man, that our heart might be wholly quieted and appeased in him our Saviour, who can never forsake us. Who are able to stand in the sight of God, and not be terrified, if that Priest did not stand before God? Who should defend us, if he were not a King? Who should save us, if he were not God? How should he have care of us, if he were not a man, and our brother? with whom we may speak, as well as we may one with another among ourselves. O most gracious Saviour, how wisely hast thou done all things? I know that thou art my brother, as it is in Psal. xxii. 22. 'I 'will declare thy Name unto my brethren,' as it is alledged in the epistle to the Hebrews, altho' thou art God, my Lord Christ, and King of heaven and earth, yet I cannot be afraid of thee, for thou art my friend and brother; this is no hindrance unto me, that I am a sinner, and thou holy; for if I had not been a sinner, there had been no need that thou shouldest suffer punishment for me. I see also in thy genealogy, that both good and evil are rehearsed, of whose posterity thou wouldest come, that thou mightest comfort timorous and weak consciences; that they should confidently and cheerfully put their trust in thee, which hast taken away our sin; and that we might be certain hereof, thou hast left us thy word, which assuredly declareth it unto us. Among the kings and princes which Matthew rehearseth, some were exceeding evil, as we may read in the books of the Kings; yet God suffereth them to be mentioned in his genealogy, as if they were worthy, that he should come to them; but he suffered not so much as one honest woman to be named therein. Four women are named, which all had an evil report, and were counted lewd; as Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. of whom Judah, the father of her husband, begat Pharez and Zarah, as in the first book of Moses it is mentioned. Rahab is called an harlot, in the book of Joshua. Ruth was an heathen woman, of whom although we read no evil,

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Jos. ii. 1. yet forasmuch as she was a heathen, she was despised of the Jews as a dog, and was detested of them. Bathshebah, the wife of Uriah, was an adultress before she was married to David, and of her he begat Solomon. Which women are undoubtedly thereof rehearsed, that we may see how God hath set forth, as it were a certan glass unto all sinners, wherein they may see, that he would be born of the posterity of sinners, that the greater sinners we be, so much more certain and greater refuge we might have to so gracious a God, Priest and King, who is our brother; in whom only, and in none other, we are able to fulfil the law, and obtain the grace of God: He came down from heaven therefore, neither doth he require any thing of us, but that we assuredly believe that he is our God, Priest and King, and then all things shall be well with us; by him alone we become the sons of God, and heirs of the heavenly kingdom, as S. Paul saith to the Galatians, 'Ye 'are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.' Gal. iii. 26. Here the hearts of all sinners may leap for joy, that they are counted worthy of such a Saviour. Must not he needs be regenerate, whose heart understandeth and feeleth this? Yea, he is carried with a most ardent love to lead a new life, for he is inspired with the grace of God, inasmuch as he layeth hold of the promise of remission of all his sins.

If we will count upon our fingers the persons named in this text, we shall find them to be forty two, which were in time past figured by the two and forty mansion places, which the children of Israel had, before they came into the promised land, as it is written in the fourth book of Moses; if we also will come into the promised land, which our Lord Jesus Christ hath prepared for us by his nativity, we must also occupy two and forty mansion places, that is, we must cease from our own purpose, and be regenerate man by man, until we come to Mary and Jesus; there at the last we shall find rest unto our souls. But this nativity is hard, for our evil and corrupt nature is very loth to leave her own will and purpose; and again, the case of nature is such, that no nativity can be without grief, yet one hath more grief,

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temptation and affliction, than another. The thief on the cross leapt at one leapt two and forty degrees, and came suddenly to Christ; so did many martyrs also, and other holy men. Notwithstanding none can go so great a journey with small grief, unless he be carried with a great wind, that is, by the Holy Ghost. We must go fair and softly from Abraham to Isaac, from Isaac to Jacob, and so forth. But we must begin at Abraham, that we may be found endued with like faith as he was, and obtain the blessing promised unto him; then we shall more easily and cheerfully go from one patriach to another. That is, we shall pass over one affliction after another, until we be called out of this travel and journey unto our rest; for a man must be so long exercised with afflictions, and so oft renounce his own will, until at the last he be brought under, and his flesh by this means be subdued, that it may obey the Spirit, and walk joyfully in the will and obedience of God. Wherefore let no man purpose with himself, to come unto heaven by leading a quiet life, and following pleasure; thus Christ saith in Luke, 'It is easier for a camel to go through 'a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom 'of God.' Luke xviii. 25. And in the Acts of the Apostles, Paul teacheth, 'That we must through much tribulation 'enter into the kingdom of God.' Acts xiv. 22. Again, in Luke Abraham said to the rich glutton, 'Son, remember 'that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and 'likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and 'thou art tormented,' Luke xvi. 25. So it behoved Christ also to suffer, and by the cross to enter into his glory. And St. Paul saith, 'All that will live godly in Christ 'Jesus, shall suffer persecution,' 2 Tim. iii. 12. Hence we may learn, that all is poison which is according to the lust of the flesh; wherefore Paul saith to the Romans, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through 'the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live,' Rom. viii. 13. The Spirit which is of God, is ready to suffer, but the flesh resisteth; this Jesus signified by his answer unto Peter, when he shewed unto his disciples, "That he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed.

killed. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," Mat. xvi. 21. Here it is manifest, that the reason of man doth flatly strive against the will of God; God will have us enter into glory by the cross and persecution, but the flesh resisteth, and is troubled in affliction. Moreover, they that are endued with the Spirit of God, rejoice, if they be afflicted for God's sake, as it is written of the apostles? "They departed from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Acts v. 41. Wherefore James saith in his epistle, James i. 2. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." O how necessary is patience for a Christian man? that In your patience ye may possess your souls, as Christ, saith in Luke xxi. 19. otherwise we shall lose them. Wherefore we must enter into a new kind of life; and if, at any time, calamity cometh, we must not burst forth into evil speeches, and take it impatiently, but we must always lift up our heart to God, and bear his will with a patient mind; he will deliver us in his time, when it seemeth good to him, and we must always think, that he beareth a fatherly affection toward us, even when he sendeth persecutions, anguishes, afflictions, and adversities, as the epistle to the Hebrews saith, Heb. xii. 5. "Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you, as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers then are ye bastards and not sons." God give us his divine grace, that we may courageously pass these two and forty degrees, and with the Lord Christ be regenerate into a new life. *Amen.*

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SERMON IV.

On the Hymn of Zacharias.

Luke i. ver. 68. *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, for he hath viſited and redeemed his people.*

THAT godly man Zacharias ſpeaketh here of things as already done, when he ſaith, 'he hath viſited 'and redeemed his people,' &c. For he was certain of them; now the child John was come, being about to begin to preach of our redemption, as the Angel had foretold of him, that he ſhould go before the Lord in the ſpirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the diſobedient to the wiſdom of the juſt men, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord: this promiſe he knew ſhould aſſuredly come to paſs. Wherein this redemption conſiſteth, I think it is already ſufficiently known unto you, namely in this, that God viſiteth and delivereth us. Which viſitation and deliverance is accompliſhed neither by ſword nor violence, but by the word alone wherein conſiſteth more, than in the blood and death on the croſs. For becauſe of the word Chriſt ſhed his blood on the croſs. It was the word that John preached, when he ſhewed the Lamb of God which taketh away the ſins of the world, that is, when he declared our viſitation and redemption, which Chriſt purchaſed with his blood. This John was the firſt meſſenger which preached the goſpel to us, to whom the goſpel was not before preached, it is as if John himſelf did now preach it, for now is firſt ſet forth unto us redemption, ſweet conſolation, deliverance from ſin, death hell and all evil. To viſit is to come unto us, to bring and declare unto us the word of ſalvation, by which we are ſaved. Zacharias conceived ſo great joy and pleaſure in his heart, that he couldnot contain himſelf, but he muſt needs burſtforth into thoſe words

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in this hymn, not only becauſe of the infant newly born, although even this brought great joy unto him, but alſo forthatby the birth of this child he beholdeth a far greater joy, foraſmuch as he was a meſſenger ſent of God to preach his word to the world. He rejoiceth therefore becauſe of ſuch a word which he ſhould hear, and for that he ſhould be as it were altered from an old man to a young man, and ſhould become the ſcholar of an infant now lying in the cradle, whom he confeſſeth to be a prophet better learned than himſelf. Manifeſt natural joy is here, for that that infant was born after a marvellous manner. Moreover here is joy of the Spirit, inasmuch as that infant ſhould become a preacher of the word of God. And I am of that mind that I think there was never any father, which conceived ſo great joy of his child, as this Zacharias did of his ſon, being ſo wonderfully born by the power of God, and for that eſpecially in the time of old age, when he was now near unto death, he is made a father of ſo great a Saint, which ſhould be a maſter and teacher of the world. It is a delight and pleaſure unto us, if we beget a child that is ſound, fair and well proportioned in body, that I may ſay nothing, what joy it would bring, if our child ſhould be an Apoſtle and preacher of the word of God to the world. Whatever ignominy therefore and contempt he ſuffered before, when he was barren together with his wife Elizabeth, he is now moſt abundantly recompenſed with plentiful honour and joy, ſuch great bleſſings doth God beſtow, if we patiently abide his leiſure. For if he at any time come, he cometh very rich and plentiful in gifts, and giveth much more than we ever either wiſhed or hoped for.

Ver. 69. 'And hath raiſed up an horn of ſalvation for 'us, in the houſe of his ſervant David' Theſe words are not ſpoken of John, for that he is not a horn raiſed up in the houſe of David, for he was born of the tribe of Levi; but Chriſt our Lord is of the houſe, and of the royal ſtock and blood of David. Wherefore Zacharias doth not ſing here, in the houſe of Levi, but that in the houſe of David an horn is raiſed and lifted up; and when Chriſt was not yet born, he nevertheleſs ſingeth ſo

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as if he were born, neither was the horn of salvation yet come; notwithstanding he knew by the revelation of the Spirit, that it should forthwith come. An horn, among the Hebrews signifieth power, confidence, dominion, and that whatsoever, wherein any man may trust, as we read, Daniel, ch. vii. where the Prophet first seeth kingdoms, then he beholdeth beasts, some having one horn, some two horns. And he afterward interpreting himself, expoundeth them for kingdoms and kings: and this is a phrase and manner of speaking peculiar to this language. Now Zacharias signifieth that Christ is our head, yea, our God, whose kingdom is his horn, thus you have what a horn signifieth among the Hebrews. He addeth, the horn of salvation and blessedness, some kingdoms are famous in name and power, others are large, abounding with plenty of great treasures, much people, honours, and all temporal things; but this is called a kingdom of salvation, grace, life, righteousness, truth, and of every thing that pertaineth to salvation, whereby it differeth from all other kingdoms. For altho' they be large, rich or mighty, yet are they counted the kingdoms of death, for they that govern them must at the last fall, die, perish, and leave their power and riches behind them. Nor was there ever any wordly kingdom, which might be called a kingdom of life, wherein is life, peace, and salvation; for only the kingdom of Christ doth glory, and triumph in this title, as God hath raised it up, that there may be nothing in it but salvation and felicity. I find nothing here spoken of manners and trades of life, or of works: For this kingdom consisteth neither in outward life or works, but in the horn, in Christ and his gospel; this kingdom is ours whereof ye have heard, that it is a kingdom of grace, life, righteousness, salvation and mercy: so that whosoever is in it, although he be inferior to John in holiness, and far unlike Christ in perfection, yet he liveth in a kingdom, wherein is nothing but salvation, and blessedness, whereof also it hath and reserveth the name; you see what difference there is betwixt other kingdoms, and the kingdom of salvation, which God hath raised up. It is said moreover, that this kingdom is raised up, in

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the houſe of David: but by what means was it raiſed up? even by the holy Ghoſt, and by his word, he ſaith in the houſe of David, for it muſt be a kingdom in the earth, and yet a kingdom of ſalvation: now confer theſe two one with another, the houſe of David is the tribe and ſtock of David who was a man, as the ſubjects of this kingdom. So that thou canſt not ſay, that he doth here make mention of an heavenly kingdom among the Angels, when as he doth nothing leſs; but he ſpeaketh of a certain kingdom which is among men, which live, cloathed with fleſh. David was a man, the ſubjects of his kingdom were alſo men ſubject to death. For as the ſcripture witneſſeth, 'Man that is born of a woman, 'liveth but a ſmall time,' he cannot paſs the bounds appointed him: how is it then, that honour and diſhonour come together in this kingdom? what agreement and conſent appeareth here, where mortal men are delivered from the power of death; where they that are worthy of death enjoy life, the unhappy are happy, and they that are ſubjects to Satan, become the ſons of God? the reaſon hereof, I hope you are ſufficiently inſtructed in, yea, I think that you underſtand it, as well as myſelf. But becauſe the text requireth it, it muſt be often repeated: we have affirmed that a Chriſtian which liveth in this kingdom, ſhall never die, foraſmuch as he cannot die, for Chriſt had therefore ſuffered death, that he might therefore overcome death, and deliver us from it. He took our ſins alſo upon himſelf, that we might not need to bear them. Moreover he ſubdued, and overthrew Satan, that we might not be ſubject unto him. Wherefore it is given to a Chriſtian, that he can never die, he can never be ſubject to ſin and the devil, for that muſt needs be true which he ſaith, that he hath raiſed up a horn of bleſſedneſs or ſalvation. And in whatſoever place that horn ſhall be, there is no acceſs, neither of death, neither for ſin, nor the devil, and that in the houſe of David. Wherefore a Chriſtian, is both defiled, and yet without ſin, and free from Satan. How cometh this to paſs? after this manner: Your brotherly charity, hath oftentimes heard heretofore, that God leaveth in us an appearance and feeling of death and the devil,

devil. So that my sin disquieteth me, and troubleth my conscience, and would drive me into despair. Moreover the judgment of God terrifieth me, death assaileth me, as if it would devour me. Satan is at hand and seeketh to suppress me, God suffereth these to remain, and taketh them not quite away. For this appearance must continue, that we may perceive and feel that we are nothing of ourselves but sinners, subject to sin and Satan. And yet under this appearance lyeth hid, life, innocency, dominion and victory over sin, Satan, hell, &c. as Christ himself saith, Mat. xvi. 18. 'Thou art Peter, 'and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of 'hell shall not prevail against it;' he saith not, they shall not assail it, nor fight against it, for these two remain to sin and death. Now it is also expedient that I feel the biting of sin, the terror of the wrath of God, the horror of death, yea, and death itself. But all this is certain outward appearance before my sight and the sight of the world, which know and judge no otherwise, but that sin, death and Satan are present. Notwithstanding in the mean time under that assault and terror the word and spirit are encouraging, preserving and assuring me, that God is not angry with me, that my sin is forgiven me, that I shall never die, nor be forsaken: upon this foundation and hope my heart doth wholly rest. And no man having such a confidence in God, remaineth under sin, neither is drowned in death, but is made a conqueror of sin and death. This is, not to prevail or overcome, for that altho' Satan attempteth, yet he doth not get the victory. We call the house of David, a mortal house, sinful and subject to the devil, according to the manner of all flesh and blood, and yet notwithstanding the horn of salvation is raised up in the same, that men of that kingdom may enjoy salvation and felicity. Hence ye see that this kingdom is the kingdom of faith, which cannot be touched nor outwardly perceived of any, which one cannot shew to another, but every one must have it in himself, that when he shall draw near unto death, shall feel sin, or even see death before him, he may then in faith, lay hold on this kingdom, and believe that his sins are forgiven him. For Christ therefore

fore died, that thou mighteſt be in this kingdom of faith. Therefore ſin ſhall encounter with thee in vain, death is taken away, Chriſt is with thee, who can hurt thee, who can do any evil unto thee? Here life and death, ſin and innocency, Chriſt and Satan, fight one with another; but Chriſt, life and innocency, do overcome and conquer. This is ſoon ſpoken, but not ſo eaſily felt, yea, the contrary ſurely is rather felt; therefore if thou wilt eſteem, and conſider this kingdom according to the judgment of the world, thou ſhalt utterly err and be deceived. The world calleth that a good and peaceable kingdom, where all things are quiet, proſperous, and go well forward, where is ſafety, peace and innocency, outwardly. But here is the kingdom of ſalvation and grace, although it always appear otherwiſe; wherefore all theſe things are to be underſtood in ſpirit and faith, and not to be judged according to the perſon or outward appearance. Neither ought it to ſeem ſtrange that this kingdom doth flouriſh in the midſt of ſins, the force of Satan and death, whereof Zacharias here ſingeth even from the bottom of his heart, and knoweth well how it cometh to paſs, faith and the ſpirit revealing it. Concerning ſin, I have ſeen or known none in whom it is not; whomſoever thou ſetteſt before thee, ſin will by and by appear: Paul, a moſt holy apoſtle, affirmeth of himſelf, that he feeleth ſin in his members. Rom. vii. 18. 'Will (ſaith he) is preſent with me, but 'how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the 'good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I 'would not, that I do.' He wiſhed, indeed, to be free from ſins, but yet he could not but live in them: and I, ſuch like alſo, am alſo deſirous to be exempted from ſin, but that can by no means be brought to paſs; we do only repreſs and keep them under; when we have fallen into ſin, we riſe again: but as long as we are clothed with this fleſh, and bear the burden about us, ſo long ſin is not extinguiſhed, nor can be wholly ſubdued. We may well go about, and endeavour to ſubdue it; notwithſtanding old Adam will lead his life alſo, until he ſhall die, and come unto the grave. What ſhall I need to ſay any more? The kingdom of Chriſt is a certain ſpe-

cial kingdom, wherein every one of the saints is compelled to make this confession: Almighty God, unto whose power all things acknowledge themselves subject, I confess myself to be a miserable sinner; revenge not, I beseech thee, my old iniquities. All also must sing this song: 'Our father, &c. forgive us our trespasses, as 'we forgive them that trespass against us.' Other righteous and holy ones, which know no measure or end of their righteousness and holiness, do understand nothing hereof; and therefore this gospel is not preached unto them, seeing that they think the kingdom of Christ to be such that there is no sin in it, but that all things in it are clean and pure: they require such a Christian as is wholly clean from all filth of sin, and without sin, as Christ himself; such a one they shall never be able to find. Now he is a Christian, who being a sinner, confesseth himself a sinner; who hateth the feeling of sin, striving against it from his heart. He is not a Christian, which thinketh that he hath no sin, neither feeleth any; but if thou knowest any such, he is an Antichristian, and not a true Christian. The kingdom of Christ therefore consisteth among sins, it is established there where he hath set it; that is, in the house of David: yea, set David himself before your eyes, and ye shall find him to have been a sinner; who notwithstanding, is bold to glory, that he is a servant acceptable to his Lord. There is none of the faithful which ought to be ashamed of this manner of praying unto God, or of any other, not much unlike to it: Lord, forgive us our sins. Is it therefore true, that they have sin, because they say so? Yea, truly, for if they should lie, they should be the children of Satan. But godly Christians are weary of this life, greatly desiring the life to come; for it is not given unto them, in this earth, to go so far, that they may say, We are subject to no vices, we are clean from all sin: if they should go so far, it is Satan that deceiveth them. Notwithstanding they are sorry for their sins, and do lament them; yet it grieveth them to the heart, that they must bear the miserable burthen of this flesh; and they cry out, together with St. Paul, Rom. vii. 24. 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me

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'from the body of this death!' This loud cry all the faithful give; for, feeling sin, they most earnestly desire to be delivered from it: and in this feeling, and knowledge of sin, the kingdom of Christ consists: so that, even in sin, there is no sin; that is, altho' I do acknowledge and feel sin, yet salvation, and the kingdom, do so firmly abide in my conscience, that God saith unto me, I will forgive thee thy sin, for thou hast faith, and believest in Christ my beloved Son, who was delivered to death for thee; neither shall thy sin hurt thee. Others, who feel not their sin, but trust in their works, and complain not of their faults and offences, thinking themselves clean; such are given to Satan, and not received or admitted into the kingdom of Christ: for they which are partakers of this kingdom, cannot be without conflicts and tribulation.

And that I may speak more plainly, reckon, I pray thee, any of the saints, whom death doth not trouble; yea, I know thou shalt not find one, who is not afraid, and trembleth not at the horrible sight of death: but the conscience taketh comfort; hence the Prophet David saith, 'The Lord hath chastened me sore; but he hath 'not given me over unto death,' Psal. cxviii. 18. It fighteth against us indeed, but prevaileth not; thus a Christian, wrapped in sin, is both under sin and above sin, and at the last, notwithstanding, obtaineth the victory. After the same manner, also, must he have to do with Satan, with whom he must wrestle all his life, and at the last, overcome him. So in the world also, he must suffer many conflicts and troubles, and yet, at length, become victor. For altho' it be a kingdom of Salvation, which hath neither rest nor quietness, but suffereth the force of hell, death, the devil, sin, and all manner of adversity and tribulation, yet they which be in it, do with an invincible courage endure, and at length overcome all evils. But God therefore permitteth these things, that our faith may be exercised, and shew forth itself. Moreover, that is a pleasure to the conscience, and bringeth unto it comfort and joy it hath such a kingdom, that it may say: Blessed be the Lord God, who hath visited and redeemed us, and hath raised up a kingdom in the house of

David. That is, for he visiteth us by his word, delivereth us from sins, and maketh us conquerors over death and Satan. Thus ye have heard both that a kingdom is raised up in the house of David, and also that a Christian is both dead and yet alive, is innocent in the midst of sins, and although he is subject to Satan, yet notwithstanding hath dominion over Satan. For both are true, for that sin, death and hell assail the flesh, but do not overcome, forasmuch as this kingdom of salvation triumpheth over them all. Therefore with a certain great boldness or confidence he calleth it an horn, that is, a strong and puissant kingdom, which hath no rest or truce; but being assailed of many and strong enemies, is always diligently occupied in defence of itself, and doth notably repel the force of the enemy. So a Christian laying hold on this horn, overthroweth sin, death and Satan. Neither consisteth this horn in our strength, neither are we makers thereof; for God hath made and raised it up by the ministery of his word, whereby we are saved. Therefore Zacharias singeth, that his song hath respect not to his own son, but to Christ. Yea, he celebrateth this kingdom as pertaining to the Jews only, and declareth that it shall be glorious, and maketh no mention of the Gentiles, how they also should come unto it; as beside others, Simeon in his song, the beginning whereof is, 'Lord now lettest thou,' &c. prophesied that we Gentiles also are chosen into that kingdom. But here he foretelleth of a kingdom raised up of God to the Jews, even a kingdom of salvation and blessedness, and that in the house of his servant David. Wherefore he saith, verse 70. 'As he spake by the mouth of his holy 'prophets, which have been since the world began.' Therefore he hath raised up this kingdom, that he might confirm his promise, whereby he had foretold, that he would sometime raise up a kingdom, &c. And now that time is come, wherein he will fulfil that his promise: so Zacharias reduceth the horn of salvation, the kingdom of Christ, to the old Testament, that out of it he may bring witnesses of so strong and puissant a kingdom; for the prophets, from the time of David, all prophesied, that the seed of David should have a kingdom in the earth,

earth, yet a ſpiritual kingdom; and, above the reſt Iſaiah and Jeremiah foretold, that it ſhould be ſuch a kingdom, that the government thereof ſhould conſiſt in the ſpirit and word; to theſe eſpecially Zachariah hath here reſpect. The other, as Hoſea, Micah, and the reſt, ſpeak of the ſame kingdom, but not ſo manifeſtly. Verſe 71. 'That we ſhould be ſaved from our enemies, and 'from the hand of all that hate us.' The Evangeliſt hath hitherto generally rehearſed, what that kingdom of Chriſt is, whereof the prophets propheſied; now he ſpeaketh of it alſo, particularly declaring wherein it conſiſts: Firſt, in this, that he delivereth us from the hands of our enemies, and from all them that hate us. Ye ſee here and underſtand, moſt dearly beloved, that this verſe doth witneſs, and moſt plainly declare, that we, which are his people and kingdom, live amongſt enemies, and that no other is to be looked for of us, but to be hated of them; that alſo the force, quality, and nature of this kingdom, conſiſts in this, that it delivereth us out of the hands of all them that hate us, as the prophet David ſaith, Pſal. cx. 2. 'The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy ſtrength 'out of Zion: rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies.' And Pſal. xlv. 5. 'Thine arrows are ſharp in the heart of 'the King's enemies.' It is a delight unto Chriſt, that his kingdom is ſet in the midſt of the fight, and in the midſt of the haters thereof. Theſe things are written for our comfort, that we which mind to ſerve under the Prince of this kingdom, be ſo inſtructed, that we look for no other than is here preſcribed, and ſet forth unto us; that we ſeek not here to get the favour of the world, neither that we ſerve the world, and labour to have no enemies therein; for the words of Zacharias declare, that it is the quality of this kingdom to deliver from enemies. Now if it delivereth us from enemies, and draweth us out of the hands of them that hate us, ſurely it cannot be a kingdom of peace, but ſuch a kingdom as is ſubject to the hatred and malice of the world; as ye ſee at this day, that our enemies bear a deadly hatred unto the light, which hath a little ſhined forth, thanks be to Chriſt therefore. No man is any where ſo hated

as a Christian; both the Pope, and the furious Bishops, with their false apostles, also the raging princes, moreover the holy, learned, and wise of the world, all at this day most bitterly hate Christians; neither are they content, that they be killed and slain, but they would have them extinguished and utterly rooted out, that there may be no memory of them, as they think, left among men. And this is the state, these are the badges, and cognizances of Christians; that when Satan by his ministers persecuteth us, he thinketh quite to root us out. This verse giveth us to understand, that Christ is our King, that he may save and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies; which he notably performs, and shews his power in the midst of the world, in the midst of the force of flesh and Satan; as peace and quietness is not left to a Christian but in Christ alone. This also we must mark, that there is not one, but many, which assault and persecute Christians; but yet, that we shall not therefore be destroyed, forasmuch as we have one which is stronger than both the world and the prince thereof, as John saith. Now as he promiseth us, we know certainly, that he doth will and is able to perform; we shall indeed feel the assault, but he will not suffer us to be destroyed or overcome, so that we hope and trust in him. It followeth, Verse 72. "To perform the mercy promised toour fathers, and toremember his holycovenant. Verse 73. The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us." He will deliver us, not only from all evil both of body, and especially of soul, but also from our enemies, Satan and men; and as a Christian must be overwhelmed with all evils together, so also he shall be again wholly delivered from all evils. And he sheweth this grace and blessing was promised to their fathers; such is the manner of the apostles also, that they oftentimes have recourse to the old Testament, as I have said before, that God spake and promised by the mouth of the prophets, &c. even as Zacharias in this place. Some men may now say, They are dead, how therefore will he shew mercy unto them? Again, what need is there to rehearse, that he would shew mercy to the fathers, when it is declared in the

prophets? But this is done, that the truth of God may be shewed forth, and may be approved unto us; that we should not be ignorant, that those things are not due to our merits. In the first book of Moses is mentioned, Gen. xxii. 18. how God promised to Abraham, That in his 'Seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;' that is, that by Christ should come peace, grace and blessing, to all nations: Which promise was deferred so long a time, that it appeared, that it was in vain and abolished. So unwise, as it seemeth to the world, doth God shew himself in his matters, as though all things went backward; notwithstanding howsoever it was delayed and seemed, yet it is fulfilled and performed, whatsoever was promised to Abraham; and God hath not only delivered him from his enemies, but hath bestowed upon him all good things, and hath given himself unto him, and all that he hath: And all this is therefore done, because (as Zacharias here saith) this mercy and goodness was before promised, and confirmed by an oath unto them, which are long since dead, when as yet we were not. He is merciful therefore and favourable, not because of our merits, as though he owed it unto our righteousness, but of his only grace, favour, and mercy. These are horrible thunderings against our merits and works, that we cannot glory, that we have delivered ourselves from sin, or that we have deserved his goodness, and the preaching of the gospel; no, it is not so. Here is no place for boasting; but this text saith, that thou, O Lord, didst promise certain thousands of years before I was born, that thou wouldest do it. Who did then desire him, that he would give us those things, when he had determined with himself to give them? And upon this promise the prophets are bold, and stay themselves; for by it we attain unto true goodness, that the mouth of every one may be stopped; that he that will glory, may glory in the Lord. For thus the Lord may say; that thou livest in my kingdom, that thou enjoyest my goodness and grace, it is not to be imputed to thee, but unto me; I promised, and determined with myself to fulfil my promises, thou being ignorant thereof. And here the mouth of every

one is ſtopped; ſo at this day alſo, none of us unto whom, thanks be to God, the goſpel hath ſhined, can glory that we obtained it by our own means, labour, or good converſation; for thoſe which are counted the beſt works, and the moſt excellent ſtudies, are diſallowed and overthrown, as to celebrate maſs, to join himſelf to this or that hypocritical ſect, which they call an Order, &c. Theſe the goſpel condemn and reject; And how can I attain to the goſpel, by that which it rejecteth? Wherefore this ſtandeth ſure and certain, that all that we have, is of the meer grace and goodneſs of God; ſo that with this honour and praiſe we may confeſs, that we have deſerved far otherwiſe, namely, hell-fire; if beſides this he beſtoweth any thing upon us, it is the gift of his grace and goodneſs. And this is that which Zacharias ſaith, that is, was foretold by the prophets, and both promiſed and confirmed by an oath to the fathers, that he would perform unto us the covenant made to Abraham. Thus he ſaith to Abraham, Gen. xxii. 16. 'By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith the Lord, that in 'bleſſing I will bleſs thee. And in thy ſeed,' &c. Which words the prophets diligently held, marked, handled, and always truſted unto them; for he doth here ſolemnly ſwear, that he might wholly aſſure us, that he would pour forth his bleſſing upon us. And now the time is preſent, the hour is come, wherein he hath ſworn, that ſalvation ſhall come unto us, as it is declared, Mark xvi. 15. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel 'to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, 'ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.' Men ſurely have not merited it, no not Abraham himſelf, who was not made partaker of the promiſe, ſeeing that he died long before the fulfilling thereof; in ſpirit, in deed and faith, he was partaker of it, but he lived not ſo long, till the goſpel was revealed to the whole world. The promiſe therefore was made unto him, although, as I ſaid, he looked not for the fulfilling thereof in this life; that is, his life was not prolonged until the preaching of the goſpel in the whole world, although in faith he obtained the goſpel for himſelf. Therefore it cannot be ſaid, that that promiſe was due to his

merits, otherwiſe, he muſt have lived in the earth until the filfilling thereof, and a due price or reward muſt have been paid unto him. But now the performing of the promiſe was after his death; ſo that every one muſt needs confeſs, that that promiſe was not made to Abraham, becauſe of his merits. Again, it cannot be ſaid, that the Gentiles which enjoy this promiſe, have obtained it by their merits, which then were not; God promiſeth to the fathers and performeth not, he performeth to the Gentiles, to whom notwithſtanding no promiſe was made, who all at that time were not. God will always retain to himſelf his honour, and be the ſame God, although the wicked world cannot be ſo perſuaded; he chaſtneth, reproveth, rebuketh, provoketh, ſtirreth, allureth, doth whatſoever is to be done; but the worldings rob him of his honour, and attribute it to themſelves, that is, they will not acknowledge, that whatſoever they poſſeſs or have, it cometh unto them by the only grace of God. When therefore we glory of ſuch good things, and acknowledge not God to be the author and giver of them, we make ourſelves as God and him as our ſervant; ſo he is diſhonoured, and the honour attributed unto us. But altho' we make merchandize of his honour, yet he hath affirmed in the ſcriptures, that he will keep his honour and glory only to himſelf; that ſo he may be acknowledged to give all things of his meer grace. Theſe things he that believeth, doth alſo receive them: he that doth not believe, ſhall at length receive his due reward. Zacharias ſaith moreover,

Verſe 74. "That we beingdelivered out of the handsof our enemies, might ſerve him without fear. Verſe 75. In holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of our life." He hath defined the nature and property of this kingdom; that is, the covenant made with Abraham, that in his 'Seed all the nations of the earth ſhould be 'bleſſed,' &c. Which bleſſing, ſaith he, I will interpret unto you, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, ye may ſerve him without fear all our life long in holineſs and righteouſneſs, before him; which to the world and our fleſh favoureth not well; for the world

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thus murmureth: I thought that he would have given us some precious thing, as a purse well stuffed with money, a rich wife, fair and beautiful children, fine houses, and whatsoever the world is delighted in; but I perceive it to be otherwise, I hear that we must without fear serve him in holiness and righteousness, and so please him. Wherefore it shall be meet that we apply spiritual eyes and ears, that we may rightly consider and understand the words: Whereas he saith, that he will deliver us from all our enemies, it is thus to be understood; that this kingdom is placed in the midst of enemies, and yet is not therefore destroyed, but always all its enemies, and adversaries are overcome. We must understand also, that the deliverance from our enemies tendeth hereunto; that we should always obey him that delivereth us, without any fear. This is a Christian and an amiable kingdom, that a Christian shall lead his life without fear; God hath bestowed this upon us, that we should serve him alone. The words without fear, include in them, that we shall quietly enjoy the good things of this present world, and of the world to come; for a Christian is sure and certain of the forgiveness of his sins, although as yet he feeleth them. He is certain that death hath no power in him; that Satan doth not overcome him; that the world cannot prevail against him. Such a heart is without peril and fear, and plainly free from them; which is not so to be understood, as though we do not feel sin at all, but that we are greatly grieved when sins trouble us, when the image or sight of death terrify us, when, being reproached and slandered of the world, we stand as destitute, and have none to whom we may turn or resort for succour, but God alone. These things indeed are felt, but they do not prevail, nor overcome us: for the heart notwithstanding, remaineth safe and quiet in God: So poverty also is felt, when thou art pinched with hunger and hast not wherewithal to fill thy belly, to maintain thy wife, and bring up thy children, nor any certain place where to dwell and abide, but all these things shall not hurt thee; thou must ask of God whatsoever thou needest, and serve

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him without fear, as our present text declareth. But herein we for the most part behave ourselves not as Christians, we judge after our own affection and sense, according as the world blame us, or report evil of us. Also when our fields have no corn, no money is in our purse, we think ourselves utterly destitute and forsaken; but a true Christian, with shut eyes and ears, saith with Paul, speaking to the Galatians, Gal. ii. and vi. O flesh, sin, death, ye are dead unto me: and I again am dead unto you, that Christ may live in me. The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world, that is, the world hath no care or regard of me, and my preaching and life is mocked and scorned of it. But with the same measure that thou measurest unto me, I will measure to thee again; if thou despisest me, I also will despise thee; if thou makest no account of me, I will make small account of thee. What care I, if the world hate me, when I displease not him that dwelleth in heaven? If this hatred continue even daily, if sin rage, and the world talk and prate many things, what then? Let it do so until it be weary, I will pass over these things as if I heard them not. This is indeeed to forsake the world, and die unto it; to live without fear; to be occupied about nothing, but thatwhich is according to God's will; to speak nothing at all but that which shall please him, and which I shall know to be agreeable to his word; that I may live so, and do those works, which I know certainly are acceptable before him; that in my whole life whatsoever I do, either outwardly or inwardly, I may be certain that I seek his glory, and endeavour to fulfil his will: So I am separated from the world, and notwithstanding do still live in the world. No man is less in the world than a sincere Christian; and again, no man is more occupied, and hath to do with the world than an entire Christian; that is, the world doth more attentively look unto him, and Satan more often and vehemently assaileth him, than him that is ignorant of Christ, of grace and of faith: Christ and Paul had experience hereof; they had combats and conflicts with the world; they were troubled and molested, yea, the whole world was against them. Again,

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a true Christian is not in the world, altho' the world rage and fret cruelly against him; for he always trusteth in God, and saith, Lord, I am thine, deal well with me, according to thy will; only be thou on my side, and I shall be in safety.

'All the days of our life.' All our life long; that is, continually, without ceasing. 'In holiness and righteous-'ness before him.' Here St. Luke divideth righteousness and holiness into two sorts; of which, one is acceptable before God, the other, before him, is of no value: Hence we understand, that the righteousness and holiness of God are of no estimation before the world, even as the world is in no esteem with God; for that which God calleth just, the world calleth unjust; and that which it calleth right, God calleth crooked; and so these two champions are continually at variance between themselves. That which God calleth holy, seemeth to the world devilish and unrighteous; therefore he comforteth us here, declaring there be two sorts of righteousness and holiness; one, which we ought to observe diligently, another, which we ought to avoid. Hitherto, it hath been the chief holiness and righteousness of all which could be invented, to run into monasteries, to put on monkish apparel, to be shaven, to wear a hempen girdle, to give himself to fasting and prayer, to be cloathed with hair-cloth, to lie in wollen garments, to observe an austere manner of living, and in fine, to take upon him monkish holiness and religion; and thus, resting in a shew of good works, we knew not but we were holy from top to toe, having regard only to works and the body, and not to the heart, where we were full of hatred, fear and incredulity, troubled with an evil conscience, knowing almost nothing rightly of God. Then the world cries openly, O that holy man, O holy and chaste woman, which have shut themselves up within the walls of monasteries, day and night kneeling and saying rosaries; O what holiness is there, where even God himself dwelleth, where the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, abideth present? These things the world boast of, and greatly esteem; but they mark not, how they pray with no earnestness of heart, how they teach and

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inſtruct no man, how they give nothig to any, but catch unto themſelves both the blood and ſweat of the poor, and leave true ſincere works undone. This righteouſneſs and holineſs the world extolleth, which notwithſtanding ſtinketh, and is wholly unclean before God; which he will have even to be unknown to us, yet the world refuſe to admit any other. But there is another righteouſneſs which God eſteemeth and accepteth, which alſo we muſt conſider; it conſiſts not in a grey garment, not in a black or white cowl, but in a pure conſcience; viz. when I believe, that Chriſt is my ſalvation, and that my works can prevail nothing hereto but he doth all things which God hath regard unto. Then I ſay no more; a grey garment is holy, a red garment is prophane, foraſmuch as I know, that not in a grey or any other garment, but in Chriſt all things conſiſt: For no man can attain unto this, that a grey garment may cleanſe his heart from filth, or that a monaſtery may purify it; for it is neceſſary that God only purify the heart by faith, and the holy Ghoſt, as Peter witneſſeth, Acts xv. When the heart is pure, the houſe is unto it as the field, and the field as the houſe; the market is as much eſteemed as the monaſtery; and on the contrary, neither remaineth unto me any work, place or garment, which I count prophane; for all things are alike unto me, after that holineſs hath fully poſſeſſed my heart: That even God ſaith unto me, Thou art godly, I am thy father, thou art my ſon. And herein we ought to perſiſt, that we, being holy and without fear, obey and ſerve him. Here the titles and badges of a Chriſtian are ſeen; and this is his cognizance, viz. that being holy, he is the miniſter of God, without fear. But what ſinner is there which dare challenge to himſelf this title? Let one come forth, which dare avouch himſelf to be godly, righteous, holy, and the ſervant of God; deſtitute of no good things, either of men or body: Now he that cannot glory of theſe things, is not a Chriſtian; for of theſe things muſt a ſincere Chriſtian be partaker. But what letteth that one dare not challenge to himſelf this title? Even a timorous conſcience; for we always feel ſin, and

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our life is ever frail. I see nothing but an honest life; although God require this also of us, yet he will not be content therewith, but there is need that there be a certain higher thing, that I dare be bold to say, Lord God, maker of the whole world, I am certain that I am holy before thee, and am thy servant; not for my own sake, who do as yet feel sins in myself, but through Christ who hath taken away my sin, and made satisfaction for me. These things surely I ought to glory of if I am a true Christian: But this seems difficult and hard; God admits no sin, my fearful and weak conscience is against me, How am I his servant, when I feel in myself, that I serve the devil, and know not that I am holy? I speak not here of the common sort of Christians, such as I, and such like, are; but of sincere Christians, which have a good conscience, and in whose heart the Spirit of God abideth, whose conscience, altho' frail and weak, and though they feel their sins, yet they are forced to say, However sin is, yet I know no sin by myself, niether am I subject to death and hell; and for this cause they strive, and at last overcome, and therefore they would even die in that confidence. But I find it far otherwise, if I set my life before my sight. Here life and the word must be separated far asunder. If thou wilt consider life, I will set also before thee the lives of St. Peter, Paul or John; thou shalt find even them not to have lived without sin. When thou desirest to be holy before God, trust not to thy life, unless thou wilt perish for ever; for thou must trust only to mercy and grace, and not to life or works otherwise thy case will be very ill: Wherefore our heart must be so affected that it say, Lord if thou shouldest call me to an account, I should not be able either by life or works to stand in thy sight, no, although I were even John the Baptist. Nevertheless therefore I glory that I am godly, and thy servant, for that thou givest me continually; and also, as thou hast promised to Abraham, thou doest, for thy Christ's sake, vouchsafe to shew thy mercy unto me: If I of myself am not godly and righteous, yet he is godly and righteous for me; if I am prophane, he is holy; if I am not the servant of God, he is the

servant

ſervant of God; if I am not without fear and carefulneſs, he is void of all fear and carefulneſs; that ſo, I may transfer myſelf from myſelf, and pierce into him, and glory, that in Chriſt and by Chriſt I am good. Thus he will have us glory, that we are godly and holy, but not by our own merit; for we muſt glory of ourſelves, as of moſt deſparate wretches. And that this may be plain, mark our life, conſider our good converſation, and manners, weigh how fooliſhly men apply themſelves to the goſpel, that I am almoſt in doubt, whether I ſhould preach any more; for as ſoon as theſe things are taught in a ſermon, that ſalvation conſiſts not in our works or life, but in the gifts of God, every one is ſlow to do good, no man will live an honeſt life, and be obedient; they falſly affirm every where, that good works are inhibited. Nevertheleſs God requireth of us, that we lead an honeſt life outwardly; and he that doth not ſo, ſhall at length find his due puniſhment. Now if it happen that we live godly and honeſtly outwardly, Satan frameth his wickedneſs: Neither do I know, at this day, how to order myſelf in this matter, not becauſe of my own perſon, but becauſe of life; for if we preach of an honeſt and godly life, the world furiouſly attempts, without judgment, to build ladders to heaven; which God neither can, neither will by any means ſuffer: Again, a diſhoneſt and ignominious life doth not become Chriſtians, neither doth a delicate life become them. What therefore muſt we then do? They which have reſpect only to an honeſt and fair life, it were better for them to be adulterers and adultereſſes, and altogether to wallow in the mire; and yet, notwithſtanding, God will not have us to lead our lives filthy and diſhoneſtly, adjudging thee even unto hell therefore, if thou ſo do. And if thou lead an honeſt life, thou wilt reſt in it, and arrogate unto thyſelf; which he cannot ſuffer. Thou muſt therefore remain in the middle path, declining neither to the right-hand, nor to the left; and lead a quiet, fair and amiable life, in the ſight of the world, which alſo may be acceptable before God; and yet do not therefore ſo greatly eſteem it, nor count ſo

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of it, as though thou doſt merit any thing of God thereby. Thus a Chriſtian continueth the holy ſervant of God without fear, not by his good works and holy life, but by the grace of Chriſt. But he that affirmeth that he is holy by his works, is blaſphemous againſt God robbeth God of his honour, and denieth Chriſt; for whom it were better, that he were ten times an homicide, or an adulterer, than that he ſhould thereby affirm himſelf to be a Chriſtian, or godly and holy; for he doth plainly diſhonour Chriſt, and it is as much as to affirm that there is no Chriſt; for he is therefore called Chriſt, for that he is our grace, mercy, redemption and holineſs. If I ſhould not attribute to the divine mercy, that God himſelf ſaves me, what leſs ſhould this be but to ſay, that he is neither holy nor bleſſed? Therefore if I am a Chriſtian, I muſt confeſs, that I am holy and a Chriſtian for this cauſe that Chriſt himſelf is holy: And altho' my conſcience reprove me of ſin, yet I muſt ſtill perſevere in this, that his holineſs is greater than my ſins. This I muſt live honeſtly outwardly, but inwardly reſt and truſt in him alone. It followeth, how Zacharias turneth his ſpeech to the child, and ſaith, Verſe 76. 'And thou child ſhalt be called the prophet of the moſt 'High: for thou ſhalt go before the face of the Lord to 'prepare his ways.' This ſhall be thy office; thou ſhalt be the firſt, that is, thou ſhalt be the prophet of the moſt High; thou ſhalt be the forerunner of the Lord, and ſhall prepare his ways. When any prince cometh, certain go before him, to prepare way and place for him, ſaying, Give place, depart out of the way. John, in like manner, runneth before, crying unto the People, Go aſide, turn out of the way, give place, the Lord himſelf cometh. Such a ſervant is John, whom the Lord followeth. Such things no prophet at any time hath ſpoken, but they have propheſied of theſe things, that a prophet ſhould ſometime come, which ſhould erect a kingdom that ſhould continue for ever, &c. But all died, not one remained, which beheld this being alive. But this prophet lived even at that time, when the Lord himſelf came, and followeth him; for the goſpel was begun to be preached, and baptiſm to be miniſtred, by the

the coming and miniſtry of John, who ceaſing, Chriſt began, almoſt in the ſame year. Now what ſhall be his office? This truly, to prepare a way for the Lord. Which preparation is to bring people to the Lord the Saviour; Chriſt is the grace, gift, King and horn of our ſalvation. This Lord and King no man receives, unleſs he be firſt humbled, that he think nothing of himſelf; for he cannot otherwiſe attain unto Chriſt, neither can ſtand together, to receive the grace of God by gift, and alſo to merit the ſame. John therefore in this part teacheth men they are ſinners, and altogether nothing. He which acknowledgeth himſelf, and feeleth himſelf a ſinner before, and to be nothing, well underſtandeth the voice of John, which is, prepare ye the way of the Lord; give pleace to him: he is at hand, who is greater than I; him ye ſhall hear, him ye ſhall obey. The other office of John which followeth, is, that he brought men to the knowledge of ſalvation, and ſheweth with his finger that paſchal Lamb, who taketh away our ſins, that he may faſten them to the croſs with himſelf, and aboliſh them, as Zacharias ſpeaks, verſe 77. 'To give 'knowledge of ſalvation unto his people, by the remiſſi-'on of their ſins;' that is, thou ſhalt begin the office, and miniſter the word, whereby is taught and learned how we are ſaved: which ſalvation conſiſts in this, not how we may be famous through abundance of riches, glory and power, in earth, as the Jews have hitherto underſtood it; but that we may obtain remiſſion of ſins, and be made partakers of the grace of God. Now where remiſſion of ſins is, there is no merit, no reward or ſatisfaction; otherwiſe it could not be called remiſſion of ſins. So that this knowledge is, to underſtand how God forgiveth us our ſins without works and merits, and ſaveth us by meer grace and mercy, as it followeth, verſe 78. 'Thro' the tender mercy of our God; where-'by the day ſpring from on high hath viſited us.' Here it appeareth that they which teach and obſerve laws, works and merits, ſtrive both againſt the mercy of God and knowledge of ſalvation; for he ſaith not, that forgiveneſs of ſins came by the prayers and works of the fathers, or of any of the ſaints, but thro' the bound-

leſs mercy of God, which Luke calleth the tender mercy, and ſuch mercy as cometh from the moſt inward affection and bowels. Notwithſtanding this forgiveneſs of ſin, which cometh unto us by mercy, is not without merit, although it cometh to paſs without our merit; but a Mediator cometh between, who hath in our ſtead deſerved it for us, which is Chriſt our Lord: for God would that ſatisfaction ſhould be made for our ſins, and that his honour and law ſhould be performed; here we were able to do nothing. But Chriſt alone was able, and ſatisfied for us, who of the infinite mercy of the Father was ſent for the ſame cauſe, and that to us, that he might diſpatch it; therefore he ſaith, through which infinite and boundleſs mercy 'the day-ſpring from on 'high hath viſited us.' Without all doubt it was no merit, but only boundleſs mercy, that Chriſt came to us, and merited and obtained for us remiſſion of ſins unto eternal ſalvation. Now he calls him, 'the day-ſpring from on 'high,' which ſignifieth unto us his divinity. And this is his meaning, 'on high,' that is, above all creatures; where nothing is higher, but height alone, there is Chriſt in his divinity, as the morning or day-ſpring: For he proceedeth from the Father, as the beams do from the ſun; whereof we have elſewhere ſpoken at large. Verſe 79. 'To give light to them that ſit in darkneſs, and 'in the ſhadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of 'peace,' Many of the fathers underſtood this of Lymbus, as they call it; but Luke agreeth here with Iſaiah, where he ſaith, 'The people that walked in darkneſs, have 'ſeen a great light, &c.' His meaning is this; Chriſt therefore came, that he might be the light of the world, and by the goſpel might enlighten men's hearts, and allure them to himſelf, which were held captive unto Satan, in blindneſs and darkneſs of incredulity; that ſo he might guide our feet in the way of peace, that is, he might govern our conſcience well, quietly and cheerfully in the kingdom of grace; that we may be afraid neither of Satan nor of ſin, death, hell, nor of any adverſity, who before have reſted, part of us in filthy vices, part in good works, notwithſtanding we could on neither ſide enjoy any quietneſs or peace, but were compelled

pelled to despair under Satan, and the fear of death; nor did we know how to find that way which leadeth unto peace, according to the fourteenth Psalm, 'The way 'of peace have they not known, &c.' Thus ye have heard Zacharias, in most goodly and fit words, most lively paint out the gospel and kingdom of Christ, with all the fruits, colours and conditions thereof; that it is a word and kingdom of grace, of forgiveness of sins, also a kingdom of peace, joy, quietness, salvation and all goodness. God grant that we may throughly know and feel the same. *Amen.*

SERMON V.

On Christ's Passion.

1. SOME think so upon the passion of Christ, that they are incensed with anger against the Jews, and envy against wretched Judas, which they vent in songs and reproachful words; and thus they are content, and think this to be sufficient, even as they are wont in lamenting the case of others, to take pity on them, and to accuse and condemn their adversaries. But that cannot be called a remembring of the passion of Christ, but rather of Judas and his wickedness. 2dly, Some have noted in their minds divers advantages, and fruits proceeding from the meditation of Christ's passion, that saying which is ascribed to Albertus being commonly in their remembrance, That it is better to think upon the passion of Christ superficially or once, than if one should fast the space of a whole year, and daily in praying go over the whole Psalter, &c. This they fellow hitherto, being blind and justly stumbling, contrary to the true fruit of the Lord's passion; such seek their own things therein, and therefore they bring with them images, books, letters and crosses. Some also go so far, that they think they shall make themselves safe from waters, terrors, fire, and from all danger, as though the Lord's suffering should be without suffering in them, contrary

to the quality and nature thereof. 3dly, Some have compassion on Christ, lamenting and weeping for him as being an innocent man, like unto the women which followed Christ from Jerusalem, who were reprehended and admonished by him, that they should weep for themselves and for their children. 4thly, Some so call to mind the passion of the Lord, and so consider Christ, that inwardly they are sore afraid, their reason or understanding is turned into a certain astonishment or bashfulness; which fear ought to proceed from hence, that we should be put in mind thereby of the wrath and immutable severity of God prepared for sin and sinners, forasmuch as he would not grant to his only begotten and beloved son, that sinners should be absolved and pardoned, unless he did make so great a satisfaction for them as he speaketh by Isaiah, chap. liii. 8. 'For the 'transgression of my people was he stricken.' What shall come unto the sinner, when a son so exceedingly beloved is smitten? It must needs be, that there is an unspeakable and a most serious and earnest matter, where so great and excellent a person doth descend to do good unto him, and suffer and die for him. 5thly, Resolve deeply in they mind, and doubt not a whit, that thou art he which so tormented Christ, forasmuch as thy sins were most certainly the cause thereof. Thus St. Peter, in the 2d of the Acts, did strike and terrify the Jews, as it were with lightning, when he said unto them, whom ye have crucified; so that the very same day three thousand men were greatly terrified, and being pricked in their hearts, said unto the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Wherefore when thou considerest that his hands were pierced with nails, think that it was thy work; when thou remembrest his crown of thorns persuade thyself that it was thy wicked cogitations which caused it, &c. 6thly, Think with thyself, that whereas one thorn pricked Christ, thou oughtest worthily to be pricked with an hundred thousand thorns, and that without intermission, and much more grievously; and that whereas one nail pierced the hands and feet of Christ thou oughtest to be grieved and molested with many, and far more sharp nails continually,

tinually, even as it shall come at the last unto those, in whom the passion of Christ hath not been effectual, but frustrate; for Christ who is the truth itself, will lie to no man, will delude no man; and that which he attempteth must needs be a matter of exceeding great importance and wonderful high. 7thly, Such fear Bernard had conceived hereof, when he said, I play'd abroad in the street, and in the king's privy chamber sentence of death was given upon me. The King's only begotten son hearing this, laid of his diadem and came forth, clothed in sackcloth, his head sprinkled with ashes, and bare-foot, weeping and crying out, that his servant was condemned to death. I beholding him suddenly coming forth, am amazed at the strangeness thereof, I ask and hearken after the cause. What shall I do? Shall I play still, and delude his tears? Alas, saith he, it is no time now to play, it is no time to be secure, when so weighty a matter is in hand. So he bid the women that they should not weep for him, but for themselves and for their children; and he adjoineth the cause, 'For if they 'do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the 'dry?' As if he said, Learn what ye obtain by my passion, and howsoever things fall out, yet this is true and known among you, that the whelp is sometimes smitten, that the mastive may be terrified. So also the Prophet hath spoken: 'All kindreds of the earth shall wail before him.' He saith not, they shall bewail him, but, they shall wail before him. Moreover they were sore afraid, of whom it is before spoken, so that they said unto the apostles, Acts ii. 'Men and brethren, what shall we do? 8thly, That this affection may be wrought in us, the Lord's passion is very diligently to be considered of, and meditated upon, as the most certain profit thereof doth much consist herein, that a man may come to the knowledge of himself, and tremble and be troubled before himself; whereunto he that doth not come, hath not yet attained unto the due profit of the Lord's passion; for the passion of Christ hath this proper and natural virtue, to make a man like unto him; that even as he was grievously tormented both in body and mind for our sins, so we also, to imitate him, must be afflicted in the

knowledge of our sins. The matter is not done in many words but in deep cogitation, and earnest weighing of sins. Take a similitude: As thou hast great cause to fear and tremble, if, when some malefactor is condemned for that he hath killed the son of a king or prince, thou in the mean season, singing and playing securely as being innocent, art terribly apprehended and convicted, that thou didst subborn the homicide; so thou oughtest to become much more fearful when thou dost resolve in thy mind the passion of Christ. For altho' the wicked Jews be now judged of God, and dispersed yet were they ministers of thy transgression, and thou for a certain art he, which with thy sins hast crucified and slain the son of God, as it hath been said. 9thly, He that feeleth himself so hardened and dull, that the passion of Christ doth not terrify him, nor bring him unto the knowledge of himself, is in a lamentable case; for Christ's passion is not effectual in him. But it is a hard thing for thee to be occupied in these things, and earnestly bent to the meditation of them; therefore pray God that he will molify thy heart, and give thee grace profitable to meditate upon the passion of Christ, because it cannot in any wise, be, that the passion of Christ should be inwardly and rightly thought upon and considered of us, unless God inspire it into our hearts. Neither this meditation, nor any other doctrine, is therefore set forth unto thee, that thou shouldest boldly rush upon it of thyself to fulfil it, but that thou shouldest first ask and desire the grace of God, that thou mayest fulfil it, not by thine own strength but by God's grace; for hereof it cometh, that they of whom it is spoken, do not meditate on the passion of Christ aright, because they desire not help of God thereunto, but rather trusting unto their own strength, and following their own invention, meditate upon it after the fashion of men, and after a slender and unfruitful manner. 10thly, If one should through the grace of God meditate rightly upon the passion of Christ, but the space of one day, or of one hour, nay, or the space of a quarter of an hour we would faithfully pronounce of him, that he hath done better than if he had pined himself with fasting

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the space of a whole year, or had run over the Psalter every day; for this manner of meditation doth change a man, and almost regenerate him a-new, like unto baptism. Then indeed the Lord's passion doth its natural, due and noble office; it killeth the old Adam, it driveth away all pleasure, joy and confidence, which may be had of creatures, even as Christ was forsaken of all, even of his father. 11thly, Since such a thing is not in our own power, we oftentimes ask it, and yet do not obtain it; notwithstanding we must not therefore despair or cease: For that is sometimes given for which we have not prayed, and that sometimes is not granted for which we have prayed, even as it is the pleasure of God, and as he knoweth to be best for us, for God will have this gift to be free and without constraint. 12thly, When a man, thus knowing his sin, doth wholly tremble in himself, he must endeavour, that sin do not still remain in his conscience, otherwise meer despair will come upon him; but he must shake them off, and cast them upon Christ, and so unburthen his conscience. Therefore see again and again, that thou do not that which perverse men do, which, within the secrets of their hearts, do vex and disquiet themselves because of their sins; and strive with them, that by good works or satisfactions, by going far on pilgrimage, or else by pardons they may become safe, and may be made free from sin, which cannot be. And, alas, such a false confidence in satisfactions and pardons hath prevailed very far. Moreover thou castest thy sins from thee upon Christ, when thou firmly believest that he suffered and was wounded for thy sins, and that he hath payed the full ransom and satisfaction for them, as Isaiah saith, chap. liii. 'The Lord 'hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.' And St. Peter 'saith, Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on 'the tree, 1 Pet. ii. 24. St. Paul saith, He hath made 'him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be 'made the righteousness of God in him.' In these, and such like authorities, thou must repose thy hope with all boldness, and that so much the more, as thy conscience doth more grievously vex and trouble thee; but if thou shalt not do this, but presumest that thou shalt be quiet

by thy contrition and satisfaction, then thou shalt never come unto quietness, but at the last shalt fall even into despair: for our sins kept and medled within our conscience, and set before the eyes of our heart, are far stronger than we, and live immortally. But when we see them laid upon Christ, and to be victoriously conquered of him by his resurrection, and confidently believe this, then they are dead and brought unto nothing; and yet being laid upon Christ, they must not remain so, for they are swallowed up in the triumph of his resurrection; so saith St. Paul, 'Christ was delivered for 'our offences, and was raised again for our justification;' that is, he hath taken upon him our sins in his passion, and hath thereby paid the ransom for them; but by his resurrection he justifieth us, and maketh us free from all sin, if so be that we believe this. If thou canst not attain unto this faith, thou must, as is before said, resort unto God by prayer, forasmuch as this gift is in the hand of God only, who bestoweth it when and upon whom it pleaseth him. Thou mayest also stir up thyself hereunto; first, not now considering the passion of Christ outwardly, (for that hath now fulfilled its function and hath terrified thee) but rather by piercing inwardly, and contemplating his most loving heart, with how great love towards thee it is replenished, which brought him hereunto, that he bears thy conscience, together with thy sins, with so great and painful difficulty. So thy heart shall wax sweet towards him, and the strength and boldness of thy faith shall be increased. Then having entered unto the heart of Christ, ascended higher even unto the heart of God, and consider that the love of Christ could not have been shewed unto thee, except the will of God by his eternal love had so appointed, whereunto Christ by his love toward thee did obey; there thou shalt find a divine heart, a good heart, a fatherly heart, and, as Christ saith, thou shalt be drawn unto the Father by Christ; there thou shalt understand this saying of Christ, 'For God so loved the world, that he gave 'his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, 'should not perish, but have everlasting life.' For this is to know God aright, when he is understood of us, not under

under the name of power or wisdom (which is a terror unto us) but under the name of goodness and love. Then faith and confidence may stand constantly, and man himself is regenerate a-new in God. When thy heart is thus established in Christ, so that thou art now become an enemy of sin, and that by love, and not through fear of punishment; afterwards the passion of Christ ought to be an example unto thee, in thy whole life, and is now to be considered, in thy mind, after a far other manner than before; for hitherto we have considered it as an outward thing, which should work in us, but now we will weigh it so, that something is to be done of us also: For example; when grief or infirmity molest thee, think how light these are, being compared to the crown of thorns, and the nails of Christ. When thou must either do or leave that which is grievous unto thee, think how Christ was taken and bound, and led up and down. When pride tempteth thee, consider with thyself how thy Lord was mocked and reputed among thieves. When lust and pleasure prick thee, think with what sharpness the tender flesh of Christ was torn with whips, and pierced through. When anger, envy, or desire of revenge, move thee, think with what tears and cries Christ prayed, even for his enemies; towards whom he might more justly have shewed himself sharp and rigorous. When sadness, or any adversity whatsoever, either corporal or spiritual, trouble thee, strengthen thy heart and say, Well, why should I not also suffer a little sorrowfulness, when my Lord sweat blood in the garden, for anguish and heaviness. Surely he we were a sluggish and ignominious servant, who, his master lying at the point of death would be held from him with a soft and easy bed. Lo! thus a man may find strength and remedy in Christ, against all crimes and offences. This is truly, indeed, to meditate upon the passion of Christ; these are the fruits of the Lord's passion, in which, he that doth after this manner exercise himself, doth surely without comparison, better, than if he heard all passions, or all superstitious masses. Such also are called true Christians, which do so represent the life and name of Christ in their

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life, as St. Paul saith, Gal. v. 24. 'And they that are 'Christs, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and 'lusts.' For the passion of Christ is not to be handled in words and outward shew, but in deed and verity: So St. Paul admonisheth us, Heb xii. 3. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. And St. Peter saith, Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind," 1 Pet. iv. 1. But such meditation is now grown out of use and begun to wax rare, wherewith notwithstanding the epistle of Peter and Paul are most abundantly replenished.

SERMON VI.

On Christ's Resurrection.

WE have heard in the treatise of the Lord's passion, that it is not sufficient to know only the bare history thereof. After the same manner it is not enough here to know, how and when Christ rose again, but both the use and the profit as well of his passion as of his resurrection must be preached and known, viz. what Christ obtained for us by them. For where only the history is preached, it is a frivolous preaching and without fruit, which both Satan and the wicked as well know, read, and understand, as we do. But when the use of them is preached, and whereunto they profit, that indeed is a fruitful and wholesome sermon, and full of sweet consolation. Wherefore Christ hath declared the use and profit of his passion and resurrection, when he thus talked with the women, Mat. xxviii. 10. 'Be 'not afraid: go tell my brethren, that they go in to Galilee, 'and there shall they see me.' And this is the first word, which they hear of Christ after his resurrection from the dead, whereby he confirmeth all his sayings, and all his benefits shewed unto them before, viz. that they should come unto us also that should believe in him, and belong only to the believers, for here he calleth not only the Apostles his brethren, but also all them which

believe

believe in him, although they do not see him visibly as the Apostles did. He doth not defer until we pray unto him and call upon, that we be made his brethren. Let any of us now come forth, and boast of his merit, or of the strength, whereby he is able to merit any thing. What had the Apostles merited! Peter denied Christ thrice. All the rest of the disciples fled away from him, they persevere and stand by him, even as the hare tarrieth with her young ones; he might have called them run-aways, and forsakers of their post in the midst of their conflict, yea traitors and wicked men rather than brethren. Wherefore of meer grace and mercy this word was brought unto them of the matrons, which the apostles themselves then well perceived, and we also throughly feel, when we are set in the midst of sins, and are overcome of damnation. This word therefore is full of all consolation and comfort, that Christ careth for such wretched men as we are, yea and that he calls us his brethren. If so be that Christ be our brother, surely I would fain know what good things we shall want. As therefore the case stands among carnal brethren, so doth it stand here. They that are german brethren by consanguinity, use their goods in common among themselves, having the same father, the same inheritance, otherwise they were not brethren; so we possess in common good things with Christ, enjoying the same father, the same inheritance, which inheritance is not diminished, by parting it, as worldly inheritances are but is always made more abundant; for it is a spiritual inheritance, a corporal inheritance, when it is distributed into divers parts, is made smaller, but in this portion of the spirit, the case is such, that he that hath gotten part thereof, hath obtained the whole. What is therefore the inheritance of Christ? In his power are life and death, sin and grace, and whatsoever is contained in heaven and in earth, his are eternal verity, strength, wisdom, righteousness. All power is given unto him, he hath rule over all things, over hunger and thirst, prosperity and adversity, &c. he reigneth over all things that can be thought whether they be in heaven or in earth; and that I may speak at once all things are in

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his power, as well eternal things as temporal. Now if I cleave unto him by faith, I shall be made a partaker of all his good things, and shall not obtain a part of the inheritance only, but I shall possess even with him everlasting wisdom, eternal strength. My belly shall not be grieved with hunger, sin shall not oppress me, neither shall I be afraid of the face of death, neither shall I dread the sight of Satan, nor shall I want plenty of any thing that is good, even as he wanteth it not. Hence we may easily understand the sayings uttered commonly in the prophets, and especially in the Psalms, as where David saith, Psal. xxxiv. 10. "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing: and in another place: The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil times: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. And again; I have been young, and now am old: yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." All which things Christ bringeth with him, for that we are, and are called his brethren, not because of any merit, but of meer grace. If we would print these things in our heart, that we might throughly feel them, it should go well with us, but they go in at one ear and out at another. This is that in which St Paul so greatly glorieth, Rom. viii. 14. "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Moreover this title ascendeth so high that mans thoughts is not able to comprehend it; for unless the spirit the comforter impart this grace unto us, no man shall ever be able to say, Christ is my brother. For reason cannot be bold to say, altho' one repeat it in words very often, as the new spirits do. It is a higher thing then that it can be so spoken, for except the heart feel it, as it is requi-

site it should, it shall be nothing but only flattery. But if thou feel it inwardly in thy heart, it will be so excellent a thing unto thee, that thou wilt much rather say nothing of it, than speak and talk of it, yea by reason of the greatness of so good a thing, thou wilt perhaps doubt as yet and be in an uncertainty whether it be so or not. They which only cry out thus: Christ is my brother, are fanatical spirits, who vainly pronounce words without any fruit. The case standeth far otherwise and far more marvellously with a true Christian, so that he is thereby enforced to be amazed, neither dareth he say or confess any thing sufficiently thereof. Wherefore we must endeavour, that we do not hear this only with fleshly ears, but that we feel it in our heart, then we will not be so rash, but we shall be forthwith carried into an admiration thereof. True and sincere Christians enter into the viewing and fear of themselves, thinking thus: O wretched and defiled creature, which am drowned in sins, am I now made worthy, that the Son of God should be my brother? how do I miserable wretch attain to such a thing? thus he is astonished, and doth not well understand the thing. But great study and endeavour surely is required, that a man may believe this, yea if it were felt, as it ought in very deed, a man should forthwith die thereupon; for he cannot understand it according to his flesh and blood, and the heart of man in this life is more narrow and straight, than that it is able to comprehend so great things; but in death, when the heart shall be stretched out, then I say we shall try what we have heard by the word. In the gospel of St. John chap. xx. Christ doth far more plainly declare unto Mary Magdalen this use and fruit both of his death and resurrection, when he saith, 'Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and 'your Father; and to my God, and your God;' this is one of the most comfortable places whereof we may glory and boast. As though Christ should say, Mary, get thee hence and declare unto my disciples, which fled from me, which have throughly deserved punishment and eternal condemnation, that this resurrection of mine is for their good, that is, that I have by my resurrection brought

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the matter to that pass, that my Father is their Father, and my God is their God. They are but few and very short words indeed, but they contain great matter in them, namely, that we have as great hope and confidence reposed in God, as his own Son himself. Who can comprehend such exceeding joy, I will not say, utter it? that a wretched and defiled sinner may be bold to call God his Father, and his God even as Christ himself. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ii. did well remember the words of the Psalm, and weighed with himself how it speaketh of Christ, who, as he saith, is not ashamed to call the believers, brethren, saying: 'I will declare thy name unto mybrethren; inthe 'midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.' If any wordly Prince or nobleman should humble himself so low, that he would say to a thief or robber, or to one that is infected with some lothsome disease: thou art my brother, it would be a thing which every one would marvel at. But as this King which sitteth in glory at the right-hand of his father, saith of some poor man, this is my brother, that no man layeth up in the bosom of his breast, neither doth any man consider of it in his mind, wherein notwithstanding our chief comfort and confidence consisteth against sin, death, the devil, hell, the law, and against all sinister success of things as well of the body as of the mind. Moreover, forasmuch as we are flesh and blood, and therefore subject to all kinds of adversity, it followeth, that the case should stand so also with our brother, otherwise he should not be like unto us in all things. Wherefore, that he might be made conformable and like unto us, he tasted and had experience of all things even as we have, sin only excepted, that he might be our true brother, and exhibit himself openly unto us; which the epistle to the Hebrews lively set forth, chap. ii. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that thro' death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death, were alltheir lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not onhim the nature of angels; but hetook onhim the seed of Abraham.

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Whereforein all thingsit behoved him tobe made likeunto his brethren; that he mightbe a merciful and faithfulhigh prieſt, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the ſins of the people: for in that he himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted." The profit, uſe and fruit of the Lord's paſſion and reſurrection, St. Paul hath gathered very briefly, and as it were into one ſhort ſum, when he ſaith, Rom iv. 25. 'Chriſt was delivered for our offences, and 'was raiſed again for our juſtification.' Whereof thus much at this time ſhall ſuffice.

SERMON VII.

On the good Shepherd.

John x. 11. to the 16. *I am the good ſhepherd*, &c.

THIS text is full of conſolation, which in a goodly parable ſets forth Chriſt our Lord, and teacheth what manner of perſon he is, what are his works and how great his affection is towards men; nevertheleſs it cannot be underſtood, but by comparing together light and darkneſs, day and night, that is, a good and evil ſhepherd, as the Lord alſo in that place. Ye have now oftentimes heard, that God hath inſtituted and ordained, in the world, two manner of preachings: One is, when the word of God is preached, which ſaith, Exod xx.' Thou ſhalthaveno other Gods before me; alſo 'Thou ſhalt not kill, thou ſhalt not commit adultery, thou 'ſhalt not ſteal;' and doth alſo threaten, that he which doth not keep thoſe precepts, ſhall die. But that preaching doth juſtify no man; for although a man be thereby compelled to ſhew himſelf godly outwardly, before men, notwithſtanding, inwardly, his heart is offended at the law, and had rather there were no law. The other miniſtry of the word is the goſpel, which ſheweth where that is to be received, which the law requireth; it neither

ther urgeth nor threatneth, but allureth men gently; it saith not: Do this or that; but it saith thus, Go to, I will shew where thou mayest receive and take, whereby thou mayest become righteous; behold, here is Jesus Christ he will give it thee. Wherefore, these two disagree one with another, as much as to receive and give, to exact and reward: And this difference is to be well understood and marked. To hardned and untractable men, which feel not the gospel, the law is to be preached; and they are so long to be urged, till they begin to be mollified and humbled, and do acknowlege their disease; which when it is done, there is then place to begin to preach the gospel. These two sorts of preachings were instituted and ordained of God, beside these there are other, which were not ordained of God, but are traditions invented by men, ordained of the Pope and his Prelates, wherewith they have perverted the gospel; these are not worthy to be called either shepherds or hirelings, but they are those which Christ calleth thieves, robbers and wolves: For if we will rule and guide men right and well, that must be done by the word of God; by which if it be not done, we surely labour in vain. Further, Christ treateth here of that second ministry of the word, and describes of what sort it is; he makes himself the chief, yea the only shepherd, for that which he doth not feed, surely remains unfed. Ye have heard that our Lord Jesus Christ, after his passion, and death, was raised from the dead, is entred and placed in immortality, not that he might sit in heaven, and rejoice with himself, but that he might receive a kingdom, might execute the function of a governor and king, of whom all the prophets, and the whole scripture, speaks very much. Wherefore he is to be acknowledged to be unto us, continually, a present governor and ruler; neither must we think that he is idle in heaven, but that he doth, from above, both fill and govern all things, as Paul saith, Eph. iv. who hath an especial care of his kingdom, which is the Chrian faith; wherefore it must needs be, that his kingdom flourish among us here in earth. Of this kingdom we have elsewhere said, that it is so ordained, that we all increase every day, and become

come purer, and that it is not governed by any force or power, but by outward preaching alone, that is by the gospel. And this gospel comes not from man, but Jesus Christ himself brought it, and put it into the hearts of the apostles, and their successors, that they might comprehend it, and into their mouths, that they might speak and publish it. Hereby in his kingdom governed, wherein he so reigneth, that all the power thereof consisteth in the word of God; now whosoever shall hear and believe this, do pertain to this kingdom. Moreover, this word is afterwards made so effectual, that it giveth all things which are necessary to man, and bringeth a certain abundance of all good things; 'For it 'is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that 'believeth,' as Paul witnesseth, Rom. i. 16 When thou believest that Christ died for thee, to deliver thee from all evil, and so cleavest unto the word, it is sure and certain that no creature is able to overthrow thee; for as none is able to overthrow the word, so none is able to hurt thee, when thou stickest unto it. By the word therefore thou dost overcome sin, death, Satan, hell; and thither thou must resort and fly, where the word is, that is, to eternal peace, joy and life; and briefly, thou shalt be made partaker of all such good things as are promised in the word. Wherefore the government of this kingdom is marvellous; the word is published and preached through the whole world, but the power thereof is very secret, neither doth any man mark that it is so effectual, and that it so much profiteth them that believe; howbeit, it must be felt and tasted in the heart. We therefore of the ministry are able to perform no more, than that we are the mouth of our Lord Christ, and the instrument whereby he openly preacheth the word; for he suffereth the word to be published abroad, that every one may hear it But faith maketh that it is felt inwardly in the heart, yea, and it is the secret work of Christ, whensoever any knoweth that it is his duty, and is also willing to do according to his divine will and pleasure. That this may be the better perceived, we will now treat of our text, wherein Christ first saith, 'I am the good shepherd.' And what is a good shepherd? A good shepherd, saith Christ, 'giveth his life for his sheep,

'And I lay down my life for the sheep.' Here the Lord declareth what his kingdom is, in the goodly parable of the sheep. Ye know that it is a beast of all living creatures most foolish and simple, so that it is commonly spoken as a proverb, if we have to speak of a simple one, he is a sheep; nevertheless, it is of that nature, more than other living creatures, that it quickly knoweth the voice of his shepherd, neither followeth it any beside his own shepherd, being always of that quality that it cleaveth to him, and seeketh for help of him alone, being not able to help itself, neither to feed itself, neither to heal itself, nor keep itself from the wolves, but relies in the help of another; Christ therefore brings the quality and nature of the sheep in a parable, and transformeth himself into a shepherd, whereby he shews what his kingdom is, and wherein it consists, and his meaning is this: My kingdom is, that I may feed sheep, that is, miserable, needy and wretched men, which well perceive and feel, that they have no help or counsel, but in me alone. But that we may declare this more plainly, we will add a passage out of Ezekiel, chap. xxxiv. 2. which speaketh of evil shepherds: "Wo be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves: should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye cloth you with the wool: ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered because there is no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered thro' all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." This is well to be marked; his meaning in this place is, that he will have the weak, sick, broken, abject and lost, to be strengthened, healed, cured, sought, not spoiled and destroyed: these things ye ought to do, saith he to the shepherds, but ye have not. Wherefore I myself,

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as he afterwards saith, will deal thus with my sheep: 'I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that 'which was driven away, and will bind up that which 'was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.' Here thou seest that the kingdom of Christ is such as hath to do with those that be weak, diseased and broken, and hath care of them to help them: The preaching whereof, indeed, is very full of comfort, but this is wanting in us, that we do not throughly feel our misery and weakness, which if we felt, we would forthwith run unto him. But how did those shepherds behave themselves? They ruled in rigour, and exacted obedience of the law; moreover, they added their own traditions, as they do also at this day, which if they be not kept, they cry out, and condemn him that transgresseth them, so that they urge more and more, and command their own inventions. But this is not to feed well, or to govern a soul, as Christ saith, who himself is not such a shepherd, for by such manner of feeding, none is help'd, but the sheep are utterly lost. Now we will speak of this place of the Prophet in order: First he saith, that the weak sheep are to be strengthened; that is, the consciences which are weak in faith, and have a sorrowful spirit, and are of a faint courage, are not to be forced, that it should be said unto them, This thou must do, thou must be strong, for if thou be so weak, thou art ordained to eternal punishment: this is not the way to strengthen the weak. Thus saith Paul, Rom. xiv. 1. 'Him that is weak in the faith receive you, but 'not to doubtful disputations.' And he addeth, Rom. xv. 1. 'We then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities 'of the weak.' Wherefore they are not to be severely compelled, but to be comforted, that although they be weak they may not despair, for they shall become stronger. Isaiah the Prophet thus foretold of Christ, chap. xlii. 3. 'A bruised reed shall he not break: and the smoking flax 'shall he not quench.' The bruised reed signifieth miserable, weak and bruised consciences, which are so easily shaken, that they tremble, and lose hope and trust in God. With these God doth not deal rigorously, and after a violent manner, but he dealeth gently with them,

leſt he break them. The ſmoking flax, which as yet burn a little, and nouriſh more ſmoke than fire, are the ſame conſciences, which ought not to deſpair, for he will not utterly extinguiſh them, but always kindle them, and more and more ſtrengthen them; which truly to him that knoweth it, is a great comfort Wherefore he which doth not gently handle weak conſciences, doth not execute the office of a true ſhepherd. Afterwards the Prophet ſaith, 'The diſeaſed ye ought to have ſtrengthened.' Who are thoſe diſeaſed ones? They which in their manner of living, and in their outward works, have certain diſeaſes and vices. The firſt belongs to the conſcience, when it is weak; the other to the manners or conditions of life, when any, being carried with a wilful mind and wayward brain, doth offend, by wrath and other fooliſh doings, as even the apoſtles fell ſometimes grievouſly. Such as are ſo vicious in the ſight of men, that they are an offence to others, and are judged obſtinate and wayward, God will not have to be rejected and deſpaired of; for his kingdom is not ordered after ſuch a manner, that the ſtrong and whole ſhould only live therein (which pertaineth to the life to come) but Chriſt is therefore ſet in it that he may take care of ſuch, and help them. Wherefore, altho' we are ſo weak and ſick, we muſt not ſo deſpair, that we ſhould ſay, that we are not in the kingdom of Chriſt; but the more we feel our diſeaſe, ſo much the more we muſt come unto him, for he is at hand, that he may remedy and heal us. Now if thou be weak and oppreſſed with fainteneſs, feeling great affliction, here thou haſt greater occaſion to go unto him, and ſay, Moſt ſweet Chriſt, I come unto thee becauſe I am a ſinner, that thou mayeſt help and juſtify me: Neceſſity compels thee hereunto; for the greater thy diſeaſe is, the more needful is it for thee to be healed. And Chriſt himſelf requireth the ſame of us and allures us to come unto him boldly and cheerfully; but others, which are not ſuch ſhepherds, think that they ſhall make men righteous, if they exact much of them and urge them much whereby they only make that which is evil worſe, as we ſee done at this day; whereas it is come to that diſorder, that all things

are moſt miſerably brought out of courſe. as in this place the prophet ſaith, 'Neither have ye bound up that 'which was broken' To be broken is, as when one's leg is broken, or a wound ſome where given; that is, when a chriſtian is not only weak and diſeaſed, that he ſtumbleth ſometime, but alſo runneth into great temptations, and ſo is brought to that paſs, that he falleth and denieth the goſpel, after the manner of Peter, who forſwear Chriſt. Now if any ſhould ſo ſtumble, and be utterly caſt down in mind, nevertheleſs we muſt not as yet caſt him of, as though he did never any more pertain to the kingdom of Chriſt; for we muſt leave Chriſt's property to himſelf, that his kingdom may remain unto himſelf, meer grace and mercy. whoſe deſire is to help them only, which are grieved with their calamity and miſery, and do greatly deſire to be delivered from it; that his kingdom may altogether abound with comfort, and he himſelf be the comfortable and gentle ſhepherd, which allureth every one to come unto him. And all this is done by the goſpel, whereby the weak are to be ſtrengthened, the ſick to be healed; for it is ſuch a word as is fit for all diſtreſs of conſciences, giving comfort to all, that none deſpair although he be a great ſinner. Chriſt therefore alone is the good ſhepherd, which healeth all ſorts of diſeaſes, and helpeth them that are fallen; which he that doth not, is not a ſhepherd. The Prophet thus goeth forward: 'Neither 'have ye brought again that which was driven away.' What is that that is driven away? The deſpiſed ſoul, which is ſo ſcorned and contemned, that it is thought in vain, whatſoever chriſtian doctrine is beſtowed upon it; notwithſtanding Chriſt doth not yet ſuffer, that it ſhould be dealt roughly with. His kingdom is not ſo ſtraight bound, that only the ſtrong, whole and perfect flouriſh therein, for this pertaineth to the heavenly life to come; now in this kingdom only grace and ſweetneſs abound. As God promiſed to the children of Iſrael, Exod. iii. 17. that that appointed land of Canaan ſhould flow only 'with milk and honey;' even as Paul, 1 Cor. xii. 23. affirmeth, that 'thoſe members of the body, which we think 'to be leſs honourable, upon theſe we beſtow more abundant honour.

'honour.' He concludeth, 'Neither have ye sought that 'which was lost.' That is lost which seemeth to be condemned, of whose return there is scarce any hope; of which sort in the gospel were publicans and harlots, and at this day, they who have not so much as a spark of godliness, but are untractable and unruly. Nor are they to be left, but all means are to be attempted, that at the last they may be reclaimed and brought into the right way; which St. Paul often did, as when he delivered two of this sort unto Satan, 1 Tim. i. 20. 'Whom 'I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to 'blaspheme.' And 1 Cor. v. 5. 'Deliver such an one unto 'Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may 'be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.' Them he cast off as condemned, and yet did not despair of them. Christ therefore is so to be preached, that he rejects no man altho' he be weak, but that he willingly receives, comforts and strengthens every man, so that he always appeareth to be the good shepherd; hence it comes to pass, that men willingly resort unto him, and there is no need to compel them. The gospel so allures, and makes them willing, that they come with a certain love and pleasure, and with all boldness; a desire and love unto Christ is increased in them, so that they do any thing willingly, who before were not to be urged and compelled. If we be constrained, we do grudgingly and unwillingly, which God plainly abhorreth; but when I perceive that God dealeth so lovingly and gently with me, my heart is as it were ravished, so that I cannot stay myself, but I must even run unto him, leaving all other things, after which all pleasure and joy ensueth unto me. Now consider how great an evil it is, when one judgeth another. The kingdom of Christ, as we have heard, is so ordained, that it healeth and justifieth only sick and miserable consciences, wherefore all they are far deceived, which have regard only to the strong and whole; it is great therefore, and very effectual knowledge whereby Christ is well known. It is grafted in us, by nature, to be altogether evil and wicked, and yet we would have every one to be honest, we earnestly regard strong Christians, not looking to the

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ſick and weak, thinking them not to be Chriſtians, if they are not ſtrong, and judge others evil, if they be not altogether holy, when we ourſelves, at the ſame time, exceed the reſt in wickedneſs. Now the cauſe is our corrupt nature, and our blind reaſon, which will meaſure the kingdom of God according to her own opinion, whereby we think that thoſe things are unclean before God, which ſeem unclean unto us, therefore that opinion muſt be removed out of our mind; for if thou haſt very much regard thereunto, thou ſhalt at the laſt think, Alas, what ſhall become of me, if all Chriſtians muſt be ſuch, namely, ſtrong, whole and godly? When ſhall I once attain ſo far? And ſo thou ſhalt bring thy ſelf into ſuch a perplexity, that thou ſhalt hardly attain unto true comfort and joy. Thou therefore muſt be ſo affected, that thou ſay, Moſt gracious Jeſus, although I find myſelf altogether weak, diſeaſed, and in a wretched ſtate, yet I will not therefore caſt off all hope, but will fly unto thee, that thou mayeſt ſuccour me; for thou only art the ſhepherd, and the good ſhepherd. ſuch a one I am perſuaded thou art, therefore I will not deſpair although I come unto thee being void of works. We muſt beſtow diligence that we may wiſely and well know Chriſt, that in his kingdom only the weak and diſeaſed are converſant, and it is nothing elſe, but as it were an hoſpital, where only the ſick and feeble lie, of whom a care muſt be had. But few men have this knowledge for this wiſdom is exceeding hard to be attained unto, ſo that it is wanting even unto them ſometime, who have the goſpel and the ſpirit, nor can any wiſdom come unto men which is greater than it. Altho' men look into the ſcripture, which ſetteth forth the kingdom of Chriſt, affirming it to be moſt precious, nevertheleſs have not a care what the words ſignify, neither do they mark that true wiſdom is hidden therein, which excelleth our wiſdom by many degrees; for it is not Chriſtian wiſdom to have to do with men which are accounted wiſe, and ſkilful, and to make mention and talk of them, but to be occupied among the unwiſe and them that lack underſtanding, not that delight and pleaſure ſhould be taken thereof, but that they may come from

sin and foolishness to righteousness and sound understanding. Hence it appears that christian wisdom consists in this, not that we look aloft, and consider those things which are high and wise, and behold and see ourselves in them as it were in a glass; but that we look to those things that are below, and mark that which is humble and foolish. He which knoweth this, let him give thanks unto God; for by this knowledge he is able to prepare and apply himself to every thing in the world. But ye shall find many, yea, even among them that preach the gospel, which are not yet come thus far. Hitherto we have been so instructed and accustomed, that none must come unto Christ, before he be altogether clean; thou must therefore forsake that opinion, that thou mayest attain to true understanding, that thou mayest know Christ aright, how he is the true and good shepherd, whereof we have heard sufficient: Now he compareth the good shepherd with the evil or hireling, and saith, 'The goodshepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.' It is true indeed, that Christ is properly the only shepherd, even as the name of Christ belongs to him alone, yet he communicateth the same unto us, that we may be called Christians; so although he be the only shepherd, yet he impareth the same name to them that be of the ministry. After the same manner, Mat. xxiii. 9, he forbiddeth, that we 'call 'no man father upon earth, 'forasmuch as there is one only our 'Father, which is in heaven;' notwithstanding Paul calleth himself the father of the Corinthians, 1 Cor. iv. 15. when he saith, 'In Christ Jesus I have begotten you 'through the gospel.' So therefore it seemeth as though God alone would have the name of a father and in the mean season notwithstanding he granteth the same name to men, that they also may be fathers, howbeit that they have not of themselves, but by Christ; even as we are called Christians, because we have nothing of ourselves,

selves, but that all things are given unto us through Christ. Moreover, An hireling, saith Christ, which is 'not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the 'wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth,' &c. This surely is a hard saying, that they which truly preach the gospel, and strengthen and heal the sheep, nevertheless, at the last, suffer the sheep to be caught and torn in pieces, and fly away, when the sheep have need of greatest help: When the wolves do not appear, they do their duty carefully and diligently, but as soon as they see the wolf break in, they forthwith leave the sheep. If they then have fed them well, that they be fat, strong and whole, they are the better liked of the wolves, for whom they have fed them. But what is the hidden meaning of this parable? The meaning of Christ is this: In my kingdom (which consisteth in nothing else, but that the weak be strengthened, the sick healed, the faint hearted encouraged) the holy cross shall not be wanting. For when it is preached, that Christ only, whose silly sheep we are, hath care of us, strengthens, heals and helps us, and that our strength and our own works are of no importance at all, (whereby all works of the world, and the divers sorts of worshipping God, are utterly disallowed) the world cannot abide such manner of preaching so that it is a natural property of the gospel, to bring the cross with it as inseparably accompanying it, and he that will unfeignedly profess it before the world, must needs yield himself to bear persecution. Since the case stands thus, it is not hard to perceive what great difference there is between the true shepherds and the hirelings: He that is an hireling preacheth the gospel as long as he is reported among men to be a learned, godly, and holy man; but when he is reproved or set upon as an heretic and wicked fellow, or moved to make a recantation, then he either recanteth, or taketh himself to his feet, leaving the miserable sheep alone without a shepherd, then their case becometh worse than it was before. What doth it then avail the sheep if they were well fed before? If they were true shepherds, they would spend their lives before they would leave the sheep to the jaws

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of the wolves, and would be ready always to offer their necks to the ax for the gospel's sake They therefore are never good shepherds which so preach the gospel, that they may thereby get unto themselves honour, riches and profit, without all doubt they are hirelings, who seek after their own things even in sound doctrine, yea, and in the word of God; wherefore they abide no longer, than while they gave honour, praise and advantage thereby, but as soon as the wolf cometh, go back, deny the word, and get themselves away, leaving the sheep, which very earnestly seek for pasture and their shepherd, who may keep them from the injury of the wolves; but that good shepherd can no where be found, who flyeth away even at that time, when the sheep have most need of a defender and strengthner. The same shall happen to us in time to come, when we shall once begin to be touched indeed; then the preachers will shut their mouths, and provide for their safety by flying, and the sheep shall be miserably dispersed, so that one shall be carried this way, another that way: God grant that some of them may stand valiantly in defence of the gospel, and spend their blood, if the case so require in delivering their sheep. Thus Christ hath painted forth the hirelings in their colours, who thus saith, 'I am the 'good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.' These words contain much, and I should spend over much time if I should handle them severally. He speaketh here of the peculiar duty that belongeth to himself; I 'know my sheep,' saith, he and they again know me. Now the sum is this: Christ knoweth us to be his sheep, and we know him to be our shepherd. He knoweth us to be such sheep as are weak and diseased, which he doth not cast off, but hath a care of, and healeth them, although they be so diseased, that all the world thinketh that they are not his sheep; and this indeed is the knowledge of the world. But Christ doth not so know them, nor doth he greatly regard what manner of ones they be, but considereth whether they be sheep: They therefore are the true shepherds, who following Christ, so know their sheep, that they look unto the persons, not to the disease. My Father knoweth

knoweth me, saith Christ but the world knoweth me not; therefore the hour shall come, that I shall die an ignominious death upon the cross, all with one voice will cry out, Was this the son of God? He must needs be a condemned man, and given up unto Satan, both in soul and body. So the world will consider and know me, but my Father will say in this sort: This is my well beloved Son, my King and Saviour. He beholdeth not my affliction, my wounds, my cross and death, but he considereth my person, that is, my very self. Therefore if I were in the midst of hell, or in the jaws of Satan, yet I should come out again, for the Father will not forsake me. Likewise I know my sheep, and they know me. They are certain that I am a good shepherd, they know me, therefore they come to me for succour, and cleave unto me, neither do they fear, that they are subject to manifold infirmities and diseases, they know very well that I would have such sheep to resort unto me. 'Other sheep I have, which are not of 'this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hearmy 'voice; andthereshallbe one fold,andone shepherd.' Some have handled this place, and affirm it shall be fulfilled before the latter day, when Antichrist, John and Elias shall come; which is flatly against the truth, and forged of Satan, that men might believe, the whole world shall at the last become Christian; which Satan did that he might darken the sound doctrine, that we might never rightly understand it. Beware therefore of this delusion, for after the ascension of Christ this was done and fulfilled, and is yet at this day fulfilled. As soon as the gospel was published, it was preached to the Jews, and this people was the sheepfold; now, he saith, that he hath certain other sheep also, which are not of this fold, which also he must gather together, whereby he sheweth, that the gospel must be preached to the Gentiles, that they also may believe in Christ, that the Jews and Gentiles may be made one church: Which he performed afterward by the apostles, who preached the gospel to the Gentiles, and brought them to the faith; so there is now one body, one church, one faith, one hope, one love, on baptism, which continueth at this

day

day, and ſhall continue even to the end of the world. Wherefore do not ſo underſtand it as though all men ſhall believe in Chriſt, for the croſs muſt always be born of us, foraſmuch as the greateſt part is always of that faction, which perſecuteth Chriſtians; the goſpel alſo muſt be continually preached, that always ſome may be brought to Chriſtianity. And thus much for a compendious expoſition of this text.

SERMON VIII.

On the loſt Sheep.

Luke xv. 1. to the 7. *Then drew near unto him,* &c.

IN this text, dearly beloved, that doctrine is contained, which we are perſuaded, and glory to be our chief doctrine, and which by beſt right deſerveth to be called Chriſtian doctrine, viz. of grace and forgiveneſs of ſins, ſet down againſt the doctrine of the law and of works. But it is a very ſhameful thing, that a ſermon ſo excellent, and repleniſhed with ſo great comfort and joy, ſhould be heard of a man that is wicked and a contemner of the word of God. This is much more miſerable, that all think they have throughly learned it; to the knowledge whereof every one will ſeem to have attained, thinking there is nothing in it, which he doth not perfectly underſtand, and that there is no need to ſpend any more ſtudy in learning it; although it be not grievous to God himſelf, neither doth it weary him, every year repeating it, or rather every day exerciſing it, as though he knew to preach nothing elſe, being unſkilful and ignorant of all other kind of doctrine. And we miſerable and wretched men as ſoon as we think we have attained to the knowledge of the chiefeſt doctrine, it is wearieſome and tedious unto us to repeat it, whereby all pleaſure and love of the word of God dieth and is extinguiſhed in us. But before I declare the article or chief point here taught, I think it good,

good, that the beginning of this chapter be diligently considered, St. Luke sheweth what gave Christ cause to make this sermon where he saith, 'Then drew near unto 'him all the Publicans and sinners, for to hear him.' In which words he plainly signifieth with what men Christ kept company, namely with them, which in the sight of all men lived as it did not become them, and were openly called sinners and evil persons. Whereby it appeareth that the Pharisees seemed to have sufficient cause to find fault with Christ, for that he, which would be counted holy, did familiarly keep company with such men: for they were commonly called Publicans, at that time, to whom the Romans let out some city or custom, for a certain sum of money: as the Turk and Venetians do at this day, for which a certain sum of money is yearly paid, and whatsoever they shall scrape together by exactions above this sum, that is their own. So also the aforesaid Publicans did, which so gathered those tributes and money wherewith they were charged, that they themselves might have some gain thereby. And seeing that a sum of money to be paid for some city or office was not small, they by all means dealt unjustly, and used extortion in all things, in all places, and with all persons. For the Lords and masters held them so strictly, that they could not get much thereby, if they dealt rightly and justly, and oppressed no man. Hence they had a very evil report, that they were most unjust exactors, and endued with small honesty and integrity of life: the rest in general were called sinners, which otherwise lived dishonestly and wretchedly, and were defiled with filthy offences, as with covetousness, with whoredom, with surfeiting and drunkenness, and such like; such resort here unto Christ, and come to hear him, as before they had known him by report to be excellent and famous both in words and deeds. However it is certain that in them although they seemed even desperate, there was a spark of virtue and honesty, inasmuch as they longed after Christ, both coveting to hear his doctrine, and also earnestly desiring to see the works which he did, when before they knew him to be a good man, and heard no ill report either of his doctrine or works,

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ſo that their life did far differ from his. Nevertheleſs they are ſo well diſpoſed, that they are not his enemies, neither refuſe or fly his company, but run unto him not of any evil purpoſe or intent, but to ſee and hear ſome good thing, whereby that they may amend their life. On the contrary the Phariſees and Scribes, which were counted moſt righteous and holy, are ſuch poiſonous beaſts, that they are not only ſore diſpleaſed at Chriſt whom they can abide neither to ſee nor hear, but alſo they cannot be content, that miſerable ſinners ſhould come unto him, and hear him, whereby they being led by repentance might amend: yea they alſo murmur, and reprove Chriſt, for that he admitted and received publicans and ſinners; ſaying, Behold is this that holy and famous man? who will now ſay that he is of God, when he hath ſociety with wicked wretches? yea rather he is a drinker of wine and a glutton, a friend to publicans and ſinners. Such a report he is conſtrained to bear of the holy Phariſees, not that he gave himſelf to gluttony and ſurfeiting, or to feed exceſſively and follow riotous pleaſure with them, but only becauſe he admitted ſuch into his company, and did not contemptuouſly reject them. For in their opinion he ſhould have gone with a ſad and auſtere countenance, in baſe apparel, and have remained ſevered from the converſation and company of men, and refuſed their fellowſhip, leaſt that by familiar cuſtom with them, he ſhould be defiled, and ſhould have done as they were accuſtomed to do after the manner of holy men. Of whom Iſaiah writeth, that they ſtudied for ſuch purity, that they did fear and ſuffer againſt their will, even the touching of a ſinner; which indeed plainly appeareth, Luke vii. in the Phariſee murmuring againſt Chriſt, becauſe he ſuffered himſelf to be touched of the ſinful woman: and it was they, that would always be his maſters, and preſcribe unto him rules whereby to live, and behave himſelf in this life; therefore in this place they murmer that he did not apply himſelf unto them, neither did diſdain the company and converſation of ſuch ſinners according to their example. Now Chriſt alſo is ſomewhat ſtout,

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plainly ſhewing here, that he can ſuffer the maſterſhip of any, but that he is altogether free and exempt from the commands of all, as commonly in the goſpels we ſee him to be at his own will and pleaſure, who nevertheleſs was both gentler and more ſerviceable than all others: but when they would deal with him by laws, and be his maſters, then all friendſhip ceaſed, for he leapt back, like the adamant laid upon the anvil and ſtricken, ſpeaking and doing the contrary of that which they require of him, though they ſeem to ſpeak even right well, alledging the word of God, as they do in this place, where they come and ſay, thou muſt do thus, thou muſt follow the converſation of honeſt men, thou muſt fly the company of wicked men. This truly is a ſubſtantial doctrine, and confirmed by teſtimony of the ſcripture: for Moſes himſelf commandeth the Jews to avoid evil men, and take away evil from among them: by this text they confirm their ſayings, and come with their Moſes, and would make Chriſt ſubject to their laws, and have him ruled by them; but Chriſt nevertheleſs will be at his own liberty: and he is not unlike the unicorn, which beaſt men deny that he can be taken alive, for being hunted, he ſuffereth himſelf to be wounded, to be ſtricken with darts, and to be ſlain, but not to be taken, ſo doth Chriſt alſo, who although he be ſet upon by laws, yet doth he not ſuffer them, but breaketh through as through a ſpider's web, rebuking them moſt ſharply; as Mat. xii. where they found fault with his diſciples, becauſe they had plucked the ears of corn on the ſabbath-day, alledging the commandment of God that the ſabbath was to be kept holy, &c. he avoucheth the clean contrary, tearing in ſunder the commandment, affirming the contrary both in words and examples, Mat. xvi. where he declareth to his apoſtles that he ſhall ſuffer and be crucified, but Peter admoniſhed him to be of good cheer, and ſetteth before him the precept of charities, ſaying, 'Maſter pity thyſelf;' there again he doth earneſtly and ſharply blame and rebuke his admoniſher, and ſaith, 'Get the behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me: 'for thou favoureſtnot the thingsthat beof God,butthoſe

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'that be of men.' And in ſhort, he is moſt impatient of all laws wherewith they deal with him, he will be moſt free from all commandments, and ackowledged to be the Lord of them: he always giveth ſuch anſwers, as with which he repreſſeth the exactors, neither will he keep any law as though he were compelled to do it; on the contrary, when he doth any thing of his own accord, then no law is ſo little or ſo light, whereunto he doth not willingly obey, and doth much more than it requireth; there can none be found more gentle and ſerviceable than he, if he be not urged nor controuled of none: moreover he ſo far humbled himſelf, that he waſhed the feet of Judas which betrayed him, according as he himſelf ſpeaketh, 'I came not to be ſerved, 'but to ſerve others,' &c. which is manifeſt to them that conſider his life, how he walked abroad in Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and in the night ſlept on the ground, faſted forty days, and took no reſt, but patiently ſuſtained ſo much labour, that they feared leaſt he ſhould be raviſhed in mind. or finally bring ſome hurt to his body; he doth all things, but refuſeth to be compelled, and ſuffereth no laws to be proſcribed unto him, which if any ſet before him, he moſt ſtoutly reſiſteth and ſtriveth againſt them; ſo he is both of a moſt ſtout and of a moſt mild ſpirit, neither is there any more ſtout, or more ſerviceable than he, who can do none of thoſe things that are exacted of him, and nevertheleſs doth all things even moſt abundantly, and as it were overfloweth with a flood of good works, and watereth all things, no man commanding him, or by way of controulment exacting and requiring any thing of him, but he being permitted to do voluntarily and of his own accord. Theſe things are done for our example, that we may learn what a true Chriſtian man is after the Spirit, leaſt we judge him according to the law, and according to our own wiſdom and underſtanding; for Chriſt is therefore our Lord, that he may make ſuch men of us, as he is himſelf; and as he cannot ſuffer himſelf to be tied and bound with laws, but will be Lord of laws, yea and of all things, ſo alſo ought not the conſcience of a

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Chriſtian to ſuffer them; for we are ſo much made free by Chriſt, that our conſcience may know nothing concerning any law, whoſe judgment and controulment it may abide to ſuffer: neither ought we any otherwiſe to be affected according to the ſtate of the inward conſcience, than if no law had been given or made; yea as if neither ten commandments, nor one, either of God, or of biſhop, or of Cæſar were given to us, that we may plainly ſay, I know nothing of any law, neither will I know any thing; for in that ſtate and condition, wherein we Chriſtians are, our works, and the works of all men ceaſe, yea and all laws alſo; for where there is no work, neither can there be any law, requiring a work, and ſaying: this thing was to be done of thee, this to be left undone; but we through Chriſt are wholly free from all works, and righteous by meer grace and mercy, whereby we live only before God. And this is our treaſure, whereby we are Chriſtans, and live and ſtand before God; for how we ought to live in outward converſation, viz. in fleſh and blood before the world, it doth nothing pertain unto this place: wherefore a Chriſtian muſt learn ſo to rule his conſcience that he ſuffer it not to be held captive or entangled with any law; but whoſoever will bind and hold it with any law, let him ſtoutly and boldly ſtrive againſt it, and do as he ſeeth Chriſt do here and elſewhere, where he uſeth ſtoutneſs and earneſtneſs of mind, that no Moſes or exactor of the law can prevail any thing with him, altho' otherwiſe he be moſt humble moſt ſweet and gentle of all men; howbeit this art is above meaſure high and excellent, which none but he underſtandeth, whereof he is the maſter, who knoweth how to appeaſe all laws and teachers of laws. We are not able to do ſo; for the devil mightily aſſaults us, and as often as he ſetteth upon the conſcience of man, he driveth him, to that point, that he entereth into a diſpute with him, what he hath done or not done; then ſuch a diſpute beginneth, wherein is debated of our ſin and righteouſneſs, even then man is brought into a dangerous caſe and into the mire, where he ſticketh, neither can he eſcape or rid himſelf out, but is forthwith deeper and deeper plunged;

for he is laden with a heavy burthen, which he is not able to bear, wherefore he walketh musing, gnawing and consuming his mind, neither can he get any quietness thereof; which I plainly feel in myself, neither can I wrestle out, and deliver myself by any travel, altho' I labour always, trying all means to escape out of this gulph, that I may answer the law, and obtain so much that it may keep silence, and say, now at length thou hast done so much, wherewith I am constrained to be content; but all endeavour and study is in vain; for such a deep pit and dangerous gulph it is, out of which no man is able to escape, although he joins the help of all men to himself, as they can bear me witness which have made trial hereof, and do as yet daily try it; the cause is our nature, which will have to do with works and laws, and hear what they say, and follow them that say, why doth he eat with Publicans and sinners? if he did eat and drink with us, he should do well. Also, why do thy disciples pluck the ears of corn on the sabbath day, &c with whom it will have to do so long, till the law saith, now thou art righteous; for it can attain to no higher understanding, than that the doctrine of the law isthe chiefest doctrine, and that the righteousness thereof is the best life before God. In it it continually remaineth captive and bound, nor can it by any means deliver itself out of this prison, being not able to pacify and appease the law, that it doth not exact any thing of it, or reprehend it in any thing, but it is compelled to be captive therein as in a perpetual prison, and the longer it strives and fights with the law, so much worse, until at the last it be wholly subdued. What therefore must I do, the law assulting and urging my conscience, especially when I perceive myself not to do that which it requireth? I answer, even that which Christ doth here, who admitteth or acknowledgeth no law, although brought out of the law of God. So learn thou also to do, that thou mayest boldly say to the law, leave off law to dispute with me, I have nothing to do with thee; and for that very cause, for which thou comest to dispute with me, and to enquire of me, how good and righteous I am, I will not hear

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thee; for it maketh no matter, what I am, or what I ought to do, and what not to do, but what Christ himself is, ought to do, and doth; for now we are in the bride-chamber, where only the bridegroom and the bride must have to do, and it behoveth not thee to come thither, nor to intermeddle with any thing there; but nevertheless it now and then knocketh and saith, in the mean season notwithstanding good works must be done of thee, the commandments of God must be kept, if thou wilt obtain salvation. Answer again: but thou hearest that it is not now time to speak of them; for now I have obtained my righteousness and the sum of all my salvation without my works in Christ my Lord, and am already saved before thou camest, therefore I have no need of thy presence; for as I have said, where works prevail nothing, neither is the law there of any importance or weight, and where there is no law, neither is there any sin; a bride therefore alone, all the rest being excluded, must reign in the bride-chamber with Christ, in whom she hath all things at once, neither needeth she any thing more, which is necessary to salvation: wherefore the law must be excluded and utterly rejected and cast off, as often as it will invade and set upon the conscience; for surely it ought not to meddle therewith neither cometh it in time, when it will have much to do there, where it ought to have nothing to do, and where it ought in no wise to come; for the conscience resteth in this article of our Christian faith, I believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, which suffered, died, and was buried for me, &c. unto whom both Moses' law, and Cæsar's, and divine laws ought to give place. All that therefore is boldly to be chased from me, whatsoever will dispute with me of sins, righteousness and such like things: behold, Christ would in this place resemble this liberty unto us, that as Christians we suffer no master in our conscience, trusting constantly to this one thing that we are baptized, and called unto Christ, and by him justified and sanctified, whereupon we may say, he is my righteousness, my treasure, my work against sin and unrighteousness, (whereof the law endeavoureth to accuse me.) If it please you to have other

righteouſneſs, works, law, &c. then may ye take them from whence you will, ſurely ye ſhall find no place for them in me. Thus may a man defend himſelf, and ſtand againſt the ſuggeſtions and temptations of the devil and of ſin, either paſt or preſent. Wherefore Moſes and Chriſt are far to be ſeparated aſunder, as alſo works and faith, the conſcience and the outward life, ſo that if the law will ſet upon me, and make my heart afraid, then it is time to ſend it away, and if it will not give place, to thruſt it out by force, and to ſay, I will willingly do good works, and will go forward as much as I am able for that time that I live among men, but here I will know nothing at all of them in my conſcience, and therefore let me alone, and talk nothing of them; for here I will vouchſafe to hear neither Moſes nor the Phariſeee, but Chriſt alone doth obtain place to reign here. I will, like unto Mary, ſit at his feet to hear his word, but let Martha tarry abroad, and buſy herſelf in the kitchen and about the houſhold affairs. And in fine, I will not trouble the quietneſs of my conſcience.

But what ſhall I ſay, whereas in the mean time I daily ſin, which ſurely is evil? I anſwer, indeed it is true I am a ſinner, and do unjuſtly, but I muſt not therefore deſpair, as though I were ſubject to condemnation, yea or tremble becauſe of the rigour of the law; for by faith I apprehended him, which hath apprehended me, and apply myſelf unto him, which hath imbraced me in baptiſm, and hath put me in his boſom, and by the preaching of the goſpel hath called me to the communion of all his good things, bidding me to believe in him. Now as I have apprehended him by faith, then may I be bold to bid the Phariſees, and Moſes with his tables, all the lawyers with their books, all men with their works, hold their peace and give place. No law hath then any power to convince or accuſe me; for in this Chriſt I have all things abundantly, whatſoever can be required in me. This, I ſay, is the doctrine and art of Chriſtians, the ſcope and end whereof is this, even to reign with Chriſt. But blockiſh men do not underſtand it, taking hereuponoccaſion to live more freely,

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as they liſt, ſaying what need is there that I ſhould do good works foraſmuch as Chriſt hath abrogated the law, &c. Their fooliſh babling is in no wiſe to be born, for Chriſt on the other part alſo to be conſidered of thee, and thou muſt mark what he doth more; for here he himſelf ſaith, That he is that man that ſeeketh the miſerable and loſt ſheep, which alſo he witneſſeth by his preſent deed, by receiving ſinners and Publicans, and by preaching unto them. Whereby thou ſeeſt that he doth fulfil much more than the law commandeth to be done, and teacheth thee to do the ſame by his example. He is of ſuch an heroical ſpirit, that he will not be under the law, yet doth he of his own accord more than the law requireth; do thou ſo alſo, neither look when thou ſhalt be forced and driven on by the law, but without the law, and of thine own accord, do that which is needful to be done, as Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 16. admoniſheth, ſaying, 'As free, and not uſing your liberty 'for a cloke of maliciouſneſs, but as the ſervants of God. And Paul, Rom. vi. 18. 'Being then made free from ſin, 'ye became theſervants of righteouſneſs.' Theſe are they, which do all things with a free conſcience, without the law, and unconſtrained; for when the goſpel is truly in the heart, it maketh a man to be ſuch an one, as doth not look while the law cometh, but it is ſo full of joy in Chriſt, that he is carried unto good works, doing well to all men, as much as he is able, and that of his own accord, before the law cometh into his mind. Moreover he beſtoweth both body and life, having no regard what he muſt therefore ſuffer, and ſo he is full of good works, which voluntarily flowing as it were out of a continual fountain are derived unto many: As Chriſt being compelled, doth not abide to take up ſo much as a ſtraw, but uncompelled giveth himſelf to be crucified for me, and for the whole world, dying for the loſt ſheep. Howbeit it is very neceſſary to diſcern theſe things well, when it is come to hand-ſtrokes, and within the throwing of the dart, as it is ſaid, the law and ſin diſputing now with thy conſcience, then ſee that thou do boldly repreſs Moſes, and bid him keep ſilence,

ſending him abroad to the old man. Drive him into Moſes ſchool, that he may diſpute with him, and ſay, Doſt thou hear? Thou art too ſlow and ſluggiſh in giving and ſerving thy neighbour. When Chriſt is to be ſerved of thee, thou wilt more willingly ſerve thy belly; thou wilt come in no peril for Chriſt's ſake, thou doſt deceitfully rob thy neighbour, circumventing him by what means ſoever thou canſt: For that ſluggiſh aſs flying labour, and following only idleneſs and wantonneſs, uſe the tables of ſtone, whom even againſt his will conſtrain to go on in his duty. Wherefore when thou ſhalt ſet upon me, in that thing which is right and meet (thou muſt ſay unto Moſes) I will willingly hear thee, and follow thy admonitions, namely according to the outward man and in outward life, where thou mayeſt bear rule like a ſchool-maſter, and as one governing a family: Where thou haſt power to command me, to be obedient, modeſt, patient, good to my neighbour, dutiful and liberal to the poor, and to celebrate God with praiſes poured forth to his glory; moreover to be content for his word ſake to abide the contumelis and ſlanders of all perſons, and to ſuffer any kind of injury of the world. With all which I am not greatly moved, yea, I would do more things than I am able to do according to the outward man; for the Spirit, by the teſtimony of Chriſt, is willing and ready, although the fleſh be weak. But if thou wilt go ſo far, whether it is unlawful for thee to come, into my heart and conſcience, there will I neither ſee nor hear thee; for there I have an uſpeakable treaſure, whoſe name is Chriſt, and in fine, whatſoever pertaineth to bridle the outward man, thou canſt not lay on a ſufficient burden but thou muſt not burthen the conſcience at all; for he that enjoyeth Chriſt is above all laws, as Paul ſaith, the law is not given for the juſt, who notwithſtanding in the mean time doth in more things, than he is able to fulfil in the fleſh: For according, to the law we are ſinners, and concerning our perſon we muſt abide under it; but through Chriſt we are far above the law. So Moſes

honeſt civily before the world; for he doth not make Chriſtians righteous and honeſt: However I will not deny that he doth this, that he ſheweth unto them their duties, which otherwiſe they would willingly fulfil and ſatisfy, but the fleſh doth not ſo willingly and with that readineſs it ought, follow the ſpirit. In which reſpect they are to be admoniſhed and urged, the conſcience nevertheleſs remaining free, ſo that the law hath no power to accuſe them; wherefore ſuch doctrine and admonition ought to be among Chriſtians (as it is certain that among the apoſtles there was) whereby every man may be admoniſhed of his ſtate and office. As for the reſt, which are not Chriſtians, they muſt be ruled by Moſes laws, and burdened with them both outwardly and inwardly, whereby they may be forced and afflicted, that they may do that which is right, forſaking that which is evil, although they do it not with a patient and willing mind. Of which kind are the raſh multitude of the unruly common ſort of obſtinate people, who do not regard nor underſtand the liberty of Chriſt, although they can bable and glory of many things concerning the goſpel, and they notwithſtanding do abuſe it only to the luſt of their mind; let them know that they are under the diſcipline and correction of Moſes: For they are not ſuch men as are capable of this doctrine, which live with ſuch a ſecure mind, that they think they have no need of the goſpel, or that they ſufficiently know it. But they only are capable hereof, which are buſied with the diſputation of the conſcience and the law, of ſin and of the wrath of God, in conſideration whereof they become aſtoniſhed, feeling the words of the heart ſpeaking thus: Alas how wretchedly have I led my life? What account ſhall I make unto God? and ſo they are too fearful and amazed; the other more than is meet, ſecure and preſumptuous, feeling no law nor ſin, no nor any trouble at all. And the caſe ſtandeth very unequally with both, for they which ſhould have nothing to do with the law, do moſt of all wreſtle with it, and alone feel it; but others of whom only the law ſhould be felt, are nothing moved with it, yea, the more grievouſly they are terrified by the law and the

wrath of God, ſo much they become more indurate, There muſt therefore be another maſter to amend theſe, namely the ſlayer and tormentor, who may teach them, being unwilling to do well in the name of the Lord and with favour, in the name of another to do that that becometh them with no favour, the reward alſo of hell-fire and all miſeries being ſet before them. Howbeit Chriſt doth here and every where elſe, both by doctrine and alſo by his own example teach us, which feel our ſin and the burden of the law, and would willingly be Chriſtians, to accuſtom ourſelves to fight againſt it, and drive it from us unto others; to give up no place to the devil, who would by the law break up the bride-chamber of Chriſt, and thruſt himſelf into his place; that is, take away from the conſcience her joy and comfort, whereby he may draw man into deſpair, that he may not be able cheerfully to lift up his heart and head before God: For this is the art of Chriſtians, whom it behoveth to know and learn more things, than that prophane and blockiſh common ſort knoweth and underſtandeth, that we may know well the manner how to fight with the devil, and to bear his aſſault, as often as he ſhall ſet upon us, and diſpute with us out of Moſes; with whom when he goeth about ſuch things, we muſt not diſpute in many works, but muſt forthwith appeal from Moſes to Chriſt, and cleave to him: For all his travels and deceits tend unto this end, that he may craftily pluck us from Chriſt, and draw us unto Moſes; for he knoweth full well the matter being brought to that point, the victory ſhall be on his ſide. Wherefore thou muſt again and again take heed that thou ſuffer not thyſelf to be plucked out of this haven, neither to be enticed out of this circle; and although he ſhall lay many things againſt thee out of the law, as it is the word of God, it is meet that thou obey, yet mayeſt thou anſwer him and ſay, Doſt thou not hear, that I will now know or hear nothing concerning the law? For we are now in that circle and haven, wherein it is not inquired what I muſt do or leave undone, but by what means we obtain to have God gentle and favourable unto us and how we get remiſſion of ſins. Here I will abide in the arms

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of Chriſt, cleaving inſeparably about his neck, and creeping into his boſom, whatſoever the law ſhall ſay, and my heart ſhall feel; nevertheleſs, ſo that we keep the principal part of our faith ſincere, and the chief point ſafe, outwardly I will willingly do and ſuffer what burden ſoever it ſhall lay upon me. Behold, he that underſtandeth this art well, ſhould be a right and perfect man, as Chriſt was, ſo far above all laws, that he might be bold to call Peter Satan, and the Phariſees fools, and leaders of the blind, and put Moſes himſelf to ſilence, and ſo live altogether without the law, and yet at the ſame time fulfil all laws; be obſtinate and ſtout againſt all that will enforce and conſtrain him, and yet notwithſtanding of his own accord profit and obey all. But truly herein conſiſteth all the defect, that we do never fully and perfectly learn this art, the devil ſo letting and hindring us, that we go prepoſterouſly to work, being too ready and willing to hear all things whatſoever the law ſaith; at whoſe threatnings alſo we are not a little aſtoniſhed, which it had been better for us not to have heard. Again in outward things alſo we give ourſelves to liberty more than is convenient, whereas the body ſhould be kept under and bridled with works, whereby it might be compelled to bear whatſoever ſhould be grievous unto it, when as yet it oftentimes ſinneth, yet ſo, that ſin abide without, where it muſt abide, and have his Moſes, who always may be near unto it, with his exactions; however inwardly let no ſin or law bear rule to reign, but let Chriſt alone rule, and reign by meer grace, joy and comfort. So all things ſhould be done rightly, and man ſhould be apt and fit to all good things, both to do and alſo to ſuffer, with a glad and obedient heart, by faith not feigned, in the grace of God through Chriſt: Wherefore let the conſcience bear rule over all laws, let the fleſh be ſubject to every law. Now he that is ſkilful of this art, let him give thanks to God, and take heed that he be not too wiſe in it, and that he conceive not a falſe perſuaſion of knowledge; for I and my like do not yet underſtand it, as we ought to underſtand it, although we be moſt expert of all, and have been long exerciſed therein; for it is ſuch an

art as no man knoweth, but they which are Christians, to the learning whereof they are compelled to be scholars all their life long. Therefore far from the knowing hereof are those secure spirits, who alone know all things, but who in very deed beside that false persuasion of knowledge, know nothing, and by this very persuasion they are farthest of all drawn from this art, and from the whole gospel; neither is there any thing more grievous, no nor a greater hurt can be brought unto Christianity, than by those petty doctors and masters, which seem unto themselves to have some wisdom; for they fill all corners of the world with sects and factions, being such man as serve neither God nor men, hear neither the law nor the gospel, but contemn the law with a secure mind, and loath the gospel with hearing it, always seeking after new doctrine. But truly we teach nothing for their sakes, inasmuch as they are not worthy of our doctrine and are so punished of God, that they can never learn it, and bring forth any fruit thereby, although they hear it; therefore let us keep it, whereof they take away nothing from us, but that they hear a vain noise and sound of it. Thus much for the first part of this sermon, in which Christ teacheth by his own example, how every man ought to keep his conscience free from all disputation of the law, and terror of the wrath of God and sin: Now consequently I think it good diligently to consider this excellent parable of Christ, where he saith, Luke xv. 4. 'Whatman of you having an hundred 'sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and 'nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, 'until he find it?' Christ is not only of a great mind, who will not follow the words and mastership of them, but bringeth probable causes of his greatness, with wisdom refelling their objections, and stopping their mouths, so that they cannot murmur against him. Moreover, he convinceth them by their own examples and deed, and concludeth, that they ought for good cause to be utterly ashamed, being bold to speak unto him, and reprehend that in him, in so great a matter, which they themselves do in a much less; for by what means could

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he more readily anſwer them, that if he ſhould ſay, Will you, O excellent and moſt wiſe maſters, command this thing, and teach me to drive away and alienate from me miſerable ſinners, which long after me, and come to hear me; there is nothing that you yourſelves do not for one loſt ſheep, who leaving ninety and nine in the wilderneſs (that is, in the field and at the fold) run to ſeek that which is loſt, neither do ye leave off ſeeking, until ye have found it, and brought it home? And you count it to be well done, for which if any ſhould find fault with you, without doubt ye would reprove him as mad and beſide himſelf. And ſhould not I, as a Saviour of ſouls, do likewiſe with men, as you do with a loſt ſheep? Seeing there is no compariſon even of one ſoul to all the creatures living and breathing in the earth. Why therefore are you not utterly aſhamed of your doings, preſuming to reprehend me in this work, which you yourſelves are forced to commend? Wherefore if ye reprove and find fault with me, you yourſelves are firſt to be reproved and found fault with. This is rightly to have anſwered, and with honour to have ſtopped the mouths of theſe fault-finders, the cauſes being ſufficiently ſhewed, why they ought not here to find fault with or controul him. They have well yielded unto him with ſhame, as it is meet, and have gained nothing by their maſterſhip than utter ſhame and ignominy; for it is a ſhame for ſuch maſters, and an exceeding great abomination, that they ſtick not to arrogate ſo much upon themſelves, as to teach that man, and admoniſh him of his duty, who of God is appointed a maſter over all. But it ought ſo to fall out that he which will rule and judge a Chriſtian by his maſterſhip, and endeavoureth to bring him from his baptiſm and the article of Chriſt, to be ruled by his wiſdom or law, doth not only become a fool, but is alſo the author of extream abomination and homicide; for he worketh ſhame to the temple and ſanctuary of God, and with deviliſh raſhneſs invadeth his kingdom, where he alone with the holy Ghoſt muſt reign. Wherefore he well deſerveth, that God bring him to ſhame and ignominy before the whole world, ſeeing that he taketh

to himſelf maſterſhip in that place, where only Chriſt ought to be maſter, and not unworthily to his great evil he kicketh againſt the prick. Wherefore it is not good to jeſt with Chriſtians, for they are ſaints, and let him that is wiſe not be too buſy with that man, whoſe name is Chriſt, for he cannot get no gain thereby, for Chriſt is moſt impatient of all their maſterſhip and doctrine; ſo alſo a Chriſtian muſt by no means ſuffer them, for if he ſuffer them, giving place to ſuch ſuggeſtions, to wit, thou oughteſt to have done this or that, or as yet thou oughteſt to do it, then is his caſe become exceeding ill, inaſmuch as he hath fallen from Chriſt. Therefore we muſt endeavour to hold Chriſt faſt, having no regard, although all the world ſhould teach us; for if we ſhall abide with him, and hold the true underſtanding of the article concerning him, we ſhall eaſily overcome all ſuch maſters and teachers; for this Chriſt will be free from all maſterſhip contending to be the only maſter and controuller of all men, that either in favour they may reverently acknowledge him for their Lord and maſter, and themſelves for fools, or in fury and indignation, being ſubject to the reproach of all men, may utterly periſh. But I have ſaid before, that the preſent doctrine for the exceeding goodneſs, ſweetneſs and conſolation thereof, is not to be ſet forth to the rude, blockiſh and unruly common ſort, to whom we do not preach it, but to thoſe only, which ſtrive with terror and anguiſh of conſcience, or ſtand in peril and danger of death, and diſpute with the devil concerning their ſins committed, whereby he would drive them into deſpair. Before theſe this amiable image is to be ſet, by which they may receive comfort and cheerfulneſs of mind; as for others which live with a ſecure mind, and little know what anguiſh and ſpiritual ſorrow is, they are to be led to Moſes to the tormentor. This is an image moſt pleaſant and amiable, and more artificially painted, than any Apelles is able to paint with his pencil, neither doth any man excel in ſuch eloquence of ſpeech, that he is able ſufficiently to declare and comprehend it in words. Wherefore it is to be apprehended in the heart by faith; nevertheleſs we muſt ſpeak ſomething

thing of it, that we may give cauſe and occaſion to others to think and conſider more earneſtly thereof. I alſo ſaith he, have an hundred ſheep, that is, that little flock of all Chriſtendom, of which number one is loſt, and fallen from the communion of Chriſtians: Now doſt thou deſire to know the affection of my mind? Then muſt thou beſtow thy diligence, to paint out well and artfully both the ſhepherd and the loſt ſheep; for that ſhepherd, which is but a man, and guideth the flock, which is created to be ſlain, hath great regard to preſerve it in ſafety, and is not a little careful how he may find the ſheep when it is loſt, and bring it home again; and with no leſs deſire the ſheep longeth after the ſhepherd; Whom if it underſtand to be his own ſhepherd (as by nature it doth) it feareth him not, but runneth unto him with great confidence, and being full of good hope, goeth before him; yea, as ſoon as ever it heareth his voice, it anſwereth by bleating. On the other ſide alſo, the ſhepherd hath great care and deſire to find again the loſt ſheep which hath ſtrayed from him; both he himſelf ſeeketh, and ſendeth forth ſervants to ſeek, whereſoever he thinketh it is ſtrayed, neither doth he leave ſeeking, until, having found it, he hath brought it home; for he is not ignorant how miſerable a living creature a ſolitary ſheep is, whoſe life conſiſteth only in the help and ſafe keeping of the ſhepherd, inaſmuch as it cannot help itſelf, but being deſtitute of a ſhepherd, periſheth. Moreover it is alſo fearful and ready to go aſtray, and as ſoon as it hath wandered out of the way, and from the ſhepherd, forthwith cometh into peril of life, and cannot tarry, although it cometh to another flock, and a ſtrange ſhepherd calleth it, it goeth on through thorny and ſedgy places, through waters and fens, until it come in danger of the wolf, or by ſome other miſchief utterly periſheth; and although it be brought into by-ways and deſerts, and is now thought to be loſt, notwithſtanding it hath this hope, as much as nature hath put into it, that if it might hear his ſhepherd, it ſhould exceedingly rejoice, being delivered from all evil. Moreover, neither doth the ſhepherd therefore ſeek it, that when he hath found it, he may wrathfully fight with

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it, or handle it ill for that it hath gone astray, or cast it to the wolf to be torn to pieces; but all his care and thought is, that he may most gently allure it to himself, and deal with it most lovingly, viz. lay it on his shoulders and carry it, until he hath brought it unto the rest of the flock.

This is that picture, resembled in this simple creature, whereby Christ shews us, what affection of mind he bears towards us, and also what we ought to promise ourselves concerning him; for since this is manifestly true in nature, the same is much more true in the kingdom of Christ, which is the kingdom of grace, love and consolation. Therefore see that thou also set before thyself the sheep pertaining to this shepherd, then shalt thou truly understand how much greater and earnest care he hath taken to preserve it, with how great study and diligence, from the heart, he is careful for it, that he may find it and bring it home again; for he will have his marvellous and continual kindness, and the unspeakable flames of his most fervent love to be shewed, or rather poured forth upon miserable, fearful and trembling consciences, which unfeignedly lament their sins, and desire to be delivered from them, and such are his true sheep; for with a man that hath lost his shepherd, and heareth him not, the case standeth as with the lost sheep which being estranged from his shepherd, strayeth more and more from him. And although it he called by the voices of others, and runneth unto them, thinking that it shall find his own shepherd, yet it findeth him not; he runneth from corner to corner, straying up and down, and wandereth further out of the way; neither is it succoured with any comfort or help, before it hear the voice of the true shepherd: We learn this to be true by daily experience, and every man tryeth it in his own heart; for the gospel of Christ being taken away, or not exercised, some false master, or author of some sect, in another place some fantastical fellow thrusteth in himself, one perverteth the supper of the Lord, the other baptism, one teacheth this, the other that, of a singular holiness of life, both which allureth to himself the miserable and straying sheep, and sheweth himself

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ſo as though he were the true ſhepherd. But by the means of theſe the ſheep is entangled only with greater errors, until it wandereth altogether out of the way: to theſe cometh the devil alſo with his cogitations, which he craftily putteth into the heart. Alas, if thou had done this or that, or had not done, &c. with all which he practiſeth nothing elſe, but that he may make it fall into great errors, that it may not know where to abide; and this truly falleth out, Chriſt being removed out of ſight, and the article of him being extinguiſhed: whatſoever ſhall be taught, counſelled and ſhewed, by what means ſoever, all things nevertheleſs become worſe and draw near unto deſtruction, unleſs the true ſhepherd come with his voice, and call back and bring again the ſtraying ſheep. Hence it appears that it is exceeding neceſſary and convenient, that we learn to know Chriſt well, that we do not behold him as a cruel tyrant or an angry judge, (as the preachers hitherto have ſet him forth to the people, and the devil himſelf ſheweth him to the hearts of men no otherwiſe to be thought upon and conſidered) who hath drawn his ſword already againſt us: but as the ſheep doth naturally look on the ſhepherd, not as on him, of whom it ſhall be terrified, chaſed and ſlain, but as ſoon as it beholdeth him, is cheered and put in hope of help, and is no more in fear or ſolitarineſs, but forthwith goeth to him with all boldneſs; ſo alſo when we deſire to conceive a truſt and hope of help, and to be ſtrengthened and eaſed with comfort, then the voice of our ſhepherd, that is of Chriſt, muſt be known and learned well of us, all voices of other ſhepherds not regarded which draw us only into errors, and toſs us up and down, and that only article muſt be heard and comprehended in mind, which Chriſt ſo lovingly and comfortably painteth in our heart, as by any means it can be painted, that I may with all confidence and boldneſs ſay, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is my ſhepherd, and I alas! the loſt ſheep, which hath ſtrayed in the deſart, but am troubled with anguiſh of mind for my wretched life, deſiring with moſt fervent affection, to have God favourable unto me, and peace in my conſcience; but truly I underſtand he is no leſs deſirous of

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me, than I am of him; I labour to come unto him, and he is careful and deſirous that he may bring me unto himſelf. If we were certainly thus perſuaded of his affection toward us, and did grave in our mind that it ſo greatly deſireth after us, and is ſo ſweetly poured forth upon us, it cannot be, that we ſhould abhor and fear him, but we would with a cheerful mind run unto him, and tarry only with him, abiding to hear the doctrine or voice of no other; for the doctrine of another coming between, either of Moſes or of any other whatſoever, doth nothing but diſquiet the conſcience, ſo that it cannot find any peace or quietneſs. Therefore Chriſt ſaith, Mat. xi. 28. "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls, &c." As though he ſaid, Run and ſeek in whom places ſoever ye will, hear and learn whatſoever can be preached unto you, yet ſhall ye find no quietneſs of heart, ye ſhall find no peace but in me alone. We will eaſily permit good works to be preached, a righteous life to be taught, the ten commandments to be delivered by inſtruction, and all things elſe which ſerve to the amendment of life, but ſo far only, as they are taught to the unruly and untractable common ſort, alſo to force and bridle the wantonneſs of our old Adam. But they which preach to the conſcience wrapped in anguiſhes and terrors becauſe of ſin, ought to preach no other words than of Chriſt. For this is that loſt and miſerable ſheep, of whom no other maſter is to be born with, but that only ſhepherd Chriſt, who neither urgeth it with the law, nor is eager upon it, but moſt ſweetly and gently handleth it and layeth the miſerable and ſinful ſheep upon his ſhoulders, doing that of his own accord, which was to be done of the ſheep, as we ſhall hear by and by more at large: but ſurely in this place the doctrine of both, or the voice of Moſes and of Chriſt, muſt be well diſcerned; for Moſes ought to have no entrance to the loſt ſheep, no nor by any means is to be admitted to it, although he preach beſt of all other: for if confounding theſe we will comfort and erect the troubled conſcience by

by the law after this ſort; be of good cheer, for thou haſt not committed homicide, neither haſt thou defiled thyſelf with adultery, neither haſt thou perpetrated any other hainous offence, or done it with a good will, &c. This alſo is a comfort, but endureth a very ſmall time, neither can it ſuſtain the aſſaults and violence of the enemy, nor bringeth it, or containeth any thing but confidence of itſelf, wherewith the miſerable ſheep is nothing helped; for it remaineth as much wandring and loſt as before, neither can it help itſelf, or come to his own ſhepherd; but if we will help and ſuccour it, we muſt ſhew it the true ſhepherd, who cometh to ſeek it, that having found it he may bring it home, and exhibit his voice unto it. Hereby it may obtain true and effectual conſolation, and be bold to anſwer Moſes, and ſay Now truly I have not any care either of thy comfort or terror, and if it pleaſe thee, amplify my ſins as much as poſſibly thou canſt, make me a man-ſlayer and parricide, or the worſt man of all men; for now I will neither hear thee with an aſtoniſhed mind, nor follow thee: but that is the ſum of my comfort and ſalvation, I confidently truſt, that I have ſuch a ſhepherd as ſeeketh me of his own accord, and having laid me on his ſhoulders carrieth me. Let us enter into diſpute hereof if thou art ſo diſpoſed, not how righteous or unrighteous I am, but how I have come unto Chriſt; wherefore we muſt always preach according to the capacity and quality of the hearers; For I have ſaid that this doctrine is not fit for a blockiſh and untractable man As it is not meet that a labourious threſher ſhould be fed with delicates, wherewith the ſick are to be ſtrengthened and refreſhed, but the hireling is to be fed with brown bread and cheeſe, and with water; the other dainty meats and eaſy of digeſtion thou muſt reſerve for the ſick or children, which are able to digeſt no groſs meat; ſo in this thing alſo thou muſt obſerve the ſame difference, that thou rightly diſtribute theſe things, and give unto every one his portion as a prudent houſholder. For thou muſt keep the doctrine of Moſes and of the law, until thou light upon unruly, hardened, and untractable men, which lead their life ſecurely and without fear, Set before theſe only

ſtrong and common meats of threſhers to be eaten, that is, offer angry Moſes unto them to be heard, who lightneth and thundereth from mount Sinai, who terrifieth the people of Iſrael bringeth them into the deſart, and drowneth King Pharaoh in the Red ſea; but when thou ſhalt light upon troubled hearts, and weak and afflicted conſciences, which are now become loſt ſheep, then ſpeak not a word concerning Moſes and all the works of God done in the law, but let thy talk be only of the works done by Chriſt in the time of grace, and well and diligently repeat to the miſerable conſcience, how he ſheweth himſelf toward the loſt ſheep, viz. that he is the gentle and good ſhepherd, which is exceeding careful for the loſt ſheep, ſo that leaving all the reſt he travelleth to find that one, and to bring it again into the way, neither doth he leave off till he hath brought it home; for it is a great grief unto him, that any man ſhould be in ſin, and therefore be troubled and fear, neither would he that any ſhould remain therein, and ſo periſh; wherefore he doth moſt lovingly allure and provoke thee by his ſweet goſpel to come unto him, and ſuffer thyſelf to be laid upon his ſhoulders and carried, and to be called his well-beloved ſheep. As for them that live ſecurely and pleaſantly, and have no regard whether God be angry or pleaſed, they are not to be called loſt ſheep, but rather wild goats, which ſuffer not themſelves either to be fed or ruled: but he, to whom his ſins are a burthen, and who fighteth in the ſight of faith, where he is not in danger to loſe Moſes, but Chriſt himſelf, and the principal article, that is, where the conſcience is in anguiſh and fear, whether it hath God gentle and favourable, this is that very man, who with groaning and ſighs ſeeketh out and crieth for his ſhepherd, and deſireth to be helped, as David doth Pſal. cxix. 176. 'I have gone aſtray like a loſt ſheep, ſeek 'thy ſervant,' &c. In the mouth of theſe this ſugar and theſe pleaſant delicates have a good taſte, with which the heart is refreſhed, that it fall not into deſpair, but being again recreated with ſuch a conſolation, is lifted up not by Moſes but by Chriſt; not that it hath Moſes a friend or is able to pacify him, but becauſe it hath God favourable

favourable through Chriſt, whereſoever Moſes remaineth with his comfort; although it be very well, as alſo it is meet, that we do not contrary, to the law practice thievery, that we ſteal not, that we commit not homicide, or otherwiſe do injury and hurt to our neighbour: howbeit that is not the right comfort of the heart, but only a momentary tickling of the outer ſkin, not during and piercing; for the devil coming and ſetting upon the heart, all comfort is utterly taken away. And although in ſome point thou haſt done well and rightly, he nevertheleſs again bringeth ten-fold more, wherein thou haſt done amiſs, yea even in the moſt pure works he can find much impurity, and turn all into ſin; wherefore we muſt in no wiſe truſt unto ſuch comfort, but muſt rather refuſe it and ſay, whether I be good or evil at this preſent I do not diſpute, but will reſerve it rather unto that place, where it ſhall be taught and intreated concerning works; but in this circle wherein I now ſtand, there is no place to entreat of works and integrity of life, but of Chriſt and his works, which he doth towards me a loſt ſheep. Wherefore if thou demand whether I be good or honeſt, I anſwer plainly, no; but if thou demand whether Chriſt be good and righteous, that undoubtedly I am able to confirm, and him I ſet for my goodneſs and righteouſneſs, unto whom alſo alone I couragiouſly appeal. For in his name I am baptiſed, of which thing I have a ſeal and teſtimony, viz. that I am his ſheep, and that he is that good ſhepherd, ſeeking his loſt ſheep, and dealing with me without all law, exacting nothing of me, neither as Moſes urgeth, troubleth and forceth me, but ſheweth unto me his meer and moſt ſweet grace, while he ſubmitteth himſelf to me, and layeth me on his ſhoulders, and carrieth me; why therefore ſhould I fear the thunderings of Moſes and of the devil, when as I reſt in his ſafe cuſtody, which hath given unto me his righteouſneſs and all other things, which holdeth and carrieth me, ſo that there is now no more danger leſt I periſh, I remaining a ſheep and denying not my ſhepherd, but repoſing myſelf wholly in him? thus haſt thou Chriſt moſt lovingly ſet forth unto thee: now only faith is re-

quired, whereof there is great need; for this doctrine is excellent, and repleniſhed with moſt ſweet comfort, but this is wanting that the uſe thereof is not felt, where it ought to be felt; for when the ſheep go aſtray, that is, when a man feeling himſelf grieved with his ſins, and cannot tell where to abide, and is caſt of the devil into a great fear of mind, then he always runneth unto the contrary, neither can he comprehend or conceive in mind, that this is true, all things falling out of his mind, which he heard here, becauſe of the preſent feeling and fear. For the devil hath blinded his eyes, neither can he perceive any thing elſe but the wrath and indignation of God. Wherewith his heart is ſo burthened, that he is not able to raiſe up himſelf in mind, and to turn his eyes any other where: nay, he lyeth ſo drowned in it, that Chriſt appeareth no otherwiſe unto him but as an angry judge, as he hath hitherto been painted out, and is ſo beaten into the hearts of all by the wicked Papiſts, ſitting on the rainbow, with a ſword coming out of his mouth. For this is one of the moſt deceitful crafts of the devil, yea and of his miſchiefs which he practiſeth againſt the miſerable ſheep, to blind his eyes, that he may not know any more his own ſhepherd and under a pretence of Chriſt to lead a man to Moſes, diſputing as much of Chriſt, as he had accuſtomed to do before of Moſes. Wherefore we have need of a ſtrong and firm faith, that we may believe theſe things to be true, when a man himſelf muſt diſpute even againſt himſelf; for the ſenſe is vehement of itſelf, wherewnto the devil alſo cometh marvellouſly amplifying ſin and terror, the greatneſs and anguiſh whereof is able to conſume, even the marrow in the bones, yea, and the heart in the body. It cannot therefore be perfectly learned ſo ſoon as ſome think. In proſperity it is eaſily believed that Chriſt is ſweet and amiable, but anguiſh and terror coming upon and overwhelming the mind, man is blind and without good underſtanding, and will judge only according to the ſenſe and underſtanding of his own heart, which he followeth and confirmeth himſelf in his own error; for he is taken therein, and can think no otherwiſe, but that it is true,

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nevertheleſs it is not ſo. Now it were a point of this art, for a man thus to ſay unto his heart, if thou confeſs thyſelf to be a loſt ſheep, thou ſayeſt right; but that thou wilt therefore run from Chriſt, and ſo think of him in thy mind, as though he were a man, which would chaſe and terrify thee, it is a ſuggeſtion and temptation of the devil; for if thou didſt rightly conſider him, and confeſs him as thy true ſhepherd, then wouldſt thou not fly from his ſight, neither would I conceive terror in thy mind, but with all cheerfulneſs and boldneſs would run unto him; for ſurely he is not therefore ready at hand that he may condemn thee, but he cometh to thee, ſeeking thee, that having laid thee on his ſhoulders he may carry thee, and exempt and deliver thee from ſins, errors, the devil and his power, yea and from all peril. Thou perceiveſt therefore that thou art a ſinner, and haſt deſerved indignation, ſo much more earneſtly is that ſhepherd to be ſought and called for of thee, that he may deliver thee from it; of whom conſider no otherwiſe in thy mind, than the ſheep doth of his own ſhepherd, whom it cannot fear, but ſeeing and hearing him becometh glad and chearful, although it hath run from him, ſo that for this deed it hath a ſufficient cauſe to fear: the whole matter therefore conſiſteth only in this, that thou do perfectly learn Chriſt aright, and conſider him according to the word of God, and not according to the proper cogitations of thy mind, and thine own ſenſes; for the cogitations of men are falſe and lying, but his words are true and cannot deceive: wherefore the word alone is to be engraven in our heart, and we muſt cleave unto it with a conſtant mind, whereby we may reprove our own heart of lying; for it alone muſt be true, and all things elſe that are contrary to it falſe and vain. But truly this is an art, whereof I am ignorant, but much more thoſe other light ſpirits, who boaſt many things of it, as they that know all things when they have once heard any thing thereof, and nevertheleſs they do not perceive or try ſo much as any whit of it: for it is an eaſy thing to ſpeak and preach of it, but how hard a thing it is to prove it in-

deed, they only have experience, who earneſtly make trial thereof. This is a moſt aimable demonſtration of our Chriſt, deſcribed by himſelf in this Goſpel, wherein he hath moſt abundantly poured forth the flames of his moſt fervant heart and affection toward us, ſhewing that he hath exceeding great care and regard to recover his ſheep, which alone leaving ninety and nine, he ſeeketh and enquireth diligently for, not to terrify it and beat, it but that he may help it, and having found it, may bring it home, and with his loving and ſweet voice and ſpeaking unto it, may cheer it, being miſerable and afflicted in conſcience. By all which thou ſeeſt, how acceptable a thing thou ſhalt do unto him, if thou truſt and cleave unto him with thy whole heart, and promiſe to thy ſelf from him all goodneſs and love. Secondly, thou plainly ſeeſt this alſo, how by all manner of outward ſigns and means, he poureth forth his joy and unſpeakable goodneſs, and alſo having found his ſheep how loving he ſheweth himſelf, for ſurely he dealeth not with it by any law, as by his right he might deal, and drive it before him as he doth the reſt. or ſuffer it to go by him; but he doth none of theſe, but layeth it upon his ſhoulders, and all the journey carrieth it through the deſart, taking all the labour and trouble upon himſelf, that at the leaſt wiſe the ſheep may reſt. Neither doth he it grudgingly, but willingly, for he is full of joy for his ſheep recovered. Now mark this alſo, how well it goeth with the ſheep, with how great quietneſs and eaſe it lieth on the ſhepherds ſhoulders, neither doth it unwillingly ſee itſelf reſting ſo ſweetly, being delivered from the difficulty of the journey, as alſo void of all fear both of dogs and wolves, that is of all errors and lies, yea, and of all perils and miſchiefs: And this ſurely deſerveth to be called a very pleaſant picture, exceeding aimable and comfortable to be looked upon. No otherwiſe doth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt deal with us, while he delivereth us, which he hath once done corporally, by his paſſion and death, but now doth often the ſame by his power, and ſpiritually by the preaching of his word. Wherefore he layeth us upon his ſhoulders, carrieth and defendeth us, ſo that we are ſafe from all

perils of death and the devil, which although they terrify us, and ſhew themſelves ſo, as though they would devour us, yet prevail they nothing; for whereas we are carried, it is a ſafeguard unto us, and the ſame exempteth us from all dangers, and putteth away all fear; as the ſheep lying upon the ſhepherd's ſhoulders, is little careful, though the dogs bark, and the wolf craftily goeth up and down, but rather hanging down the head, is quiet and ſleepeth ſoundly; ſo we alſo, if we ſtand and abide unmoveable in this article, I believe in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who ſuffered, died, roſe again for us, &c. there is no cauſe why we ſhould be careful leaſt we periſh, or be devoured of the devil, though he open his jaws never ſo wide; for we are not then in our own way, neither walk we upon our own feet, but we hang upon the neck of our ſhepherd, and lie upon his own ſhoulders, where we are ſafe enough. For ſin, death and hell, although indeed they be terrible, yet dare they not ſet upon him, otherwiſe if it were not for this, we ſhould be miſerable ſheep, which ſhould forthwith be brought into a lamentable and wretched caſe. For even as a ſheep cannot take heed and foreſee to itſelf, that it ſtray not out of the way, unleſs it be led of the ſhepherd, and when it hath ſtrayed and is loſt, cannot by itſelf come again to the ſhepherd, but muſt be ſought and inquired for of him, until he hath found it, and ſo muſt be laid upon his ſhoulders and brought home again, leaſt that it be again frayed and chaſed from him, or catch'd of the wolf and rent in pieces; ſo we alſo our ſelves can profit our ſelves neither by help nor counſel, that we might obtain peace and quietneſs of conſcience, and eſcape out of the hands of the devil, death, and hell, except Chriſt himſelf repeat his word unto us, and call us again unto him; and although we come unto him, and now ſtand in faith, yet it is not in our power to keep ourſelves therein, or to ſtand by our own ſtrength, unleſs he often by the power of his word, hold lift up, and carry us, for the devil always imagineth and purpoſeth deceit and deſtruction towards us, going about like a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour, as St. Peter witneſſeth. Here is no place to boaſt of free-will,

or of our own ſtrength, which is none, neither in beginning any thing, neither in going forward, much leſs in perſevering or continuing in it, but Chriſt our ſhepherd alone doth all things. But we are ſure that while we ly upon the ſhoulders of Chriſt, we ſhall remain ſafe from all terror and misfortune; for he will not ſuffer us to be plucked or taken from his neck, neither will he himſelf caſt us off, being ſo glad and joyful, that he hath found his loſt ſheep, and brought it again to the reſt of the flock; and in fine here is no terror or trouble, but meer life and grace, whereby he handleth his ſheep moſt lovingly and gently. But on the contrary Moſes, not as a ſhepherd of miſerable and weak ſheep, but as a maſter of ſtronger cattle, driveth his herds with a ſtaff and rod, three days journey through the deſert, until they be tired and weary with walking; of this ſhepherd thoſe hardned and wild ones are to be tamed and bridled; and we alſo, when we ſhall be under Moſes, to wit, according to the fleſh and the outward life, muſt go, and do that which the law requireth: But in that we are, and are called Chriſtians, we muſt by no means ſuffer, that any work be laid upon us or exacted of us, but muſt give ourſelves only to Chriſt to be carried and gently lifted up, not upon horſes and chariots, but even upon his own ſhoulders; which cometh to paſs, when he ſuffereth the word to be preached unto us, and we believe the ſame, that he died for us, that on the croſs he bore our ſins in his body, that he hath overthrown the devil, death, and ſin, and put them under his feet, and hath made and opened unto us, entrance to eternal life: We muſt not have reſpect to our own life, how righteous and ſtrong we are, but we muſt ſtudy upon this one thing, that we may reſt lying upon his ſhoulders: In this circle we muſt have no care of ſin, death, life, or penſiveneſs, inaſmuch as we have all things to the full in Chriſt, who heareth and keepeth us. Now he is not content that with ſuch great travel he ſeeketh his ſheep, and having found it, he carrieth it with incredible joy, he maketh feſtival days, and exceedingly rejoiceth, calling together his neighbours and friends, that they may rejoice with him; yea, he af-

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firmeth, that God also in heaven with the whole heavenly host, do rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. In which words he sheweth who he is, which deserveth to be called the lost sheep, namely such a sinner, as being led by repentance of his former life, most fervently desiring to be delivered from sins, and earnestly endeavouring to come unto Christ; such a one hath a miserable and troubled, yea, a contrite and humbled heart, and an afflicted conscience, the devil by all means fighteth against, and presseth it, that it is almost overcome with distresses, &c. but Christ assisteth and comforteth him, for he seeketh no sheep but that which is lost, and and cannot help it self. Can Christ be preached with greater gentleness, and more effectual consolation of words; Or what should he do more to cheer the mind of a sinner, and confirm in him a sure confidence towards himself? We see him set forth by himself to us miserable sinners, as a most loving shepherd, who most sorrowfully seeketh his sheep being lost, and most joyfully bringeth them again, being found, and taketh so great joy, that with him all the Angels and Saints rejoice over us. Now he that firmly believes these thing, would without doubt, through Christ receive true comfort and joy; as here he hath a certain promise, that if he surely cleave unto Christ, and rest upon his shoulders, he shall be an acceptable and welcome guest in the kingdom of Heaven, and shall be received with exceeding great joy. But we being troubled with sorrow and anguish of conscience, have a far different feeling and affection, when the heart thinks that all the Angels stand behind us with drawn swords, which so troubles us, that we can conceive no cheerfulness of mind, neither of God, nor of the Angels; and there are some which can behold no creature with a glad mind, fearing the beholding of the sun, yea, being sore afraid at the noise of a leaf; all which proceed from hence, they trouble and vex themselves with their own thoughts, out of which they would willingly wrestle, sparing no labour, that they might feel that uprightness and integrity, which would be void of fear; but if thou be desirous to conceive true comfort and joy in thy heart, then see that

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thou diligently and well print this amiable image of the most loving shepherd, and the word of the gospel, and seek it where it is to be sought, that is in Christ, and no where else; for in this man thou shalt find all things, so that thou abide in him, and rest upon his shoulders; but whatsoever comfort can be obtained without him, it cometh not from the heart, although thou call the help of all creatures, and shouldest also partake of the pleasure and joy of the whole world.

SERMON IX.

Of the Woman of Canaan.

Matth. xv. 21. to the 28. *Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, &c.*

IN this text is set forth unto us an example of a constant and stedfast faith; for this woman did so persevere, that she overcame three most sharp conflicts, and notably teacheth us, what is the quality and proper virtue of a true and right faith, which indeed is a certain trust, and most deeply settled in the mind, of the divine goodness and grace, known and made manifest by the word of God. For Mark mentioneth that she heard the report of Jesus, without doubt, good and joyful, that he is a bountiful man, and marvelous ready to help every one; that report was good tydings, and the word of grace unto her, whereupon this her faith did begin; for unless she had believed that he might be made partaker of Christ's goodness, she would not have followed him, or cried after him, which is that we have often admonished, and which we are taught Rom. x. 17. 'Faith cometh by hearing.' Wherefore the word ought always to go before, and give the beginning of salvation; but how came it to pass, whereas many others heard the same report of our Saviour Jesus, yet they followed him not, but quite despised that report? I answer, they that are not sick, as they have

have no need of the Physician, so neither are they desirous of him. But this woman was afflicted and felt her necessity, that report was so joyful unto her, that she being stirred up thereby, did follow Christ, running after such a pleasant Saviour, Cant. i. Wherefore Moses must always go before; who may teach us to feel sin, whereby grace may be wished for and desired of us; it is vain therefore, although Christ be preached to be loving, and to be desired and longed for, if a man be not before humbled through knowledge of himself, and made desirous of Christ, according to the song of Mary. The Lord 'hath filled the hungry with glad 'things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.' Luke i. 53. Now all these things are written for the consolation, and lifting up of them which be miserable, poor, needy, oppressed with sin, and objects, that they may know to whom they may flee in all distresses, and where they may seek for help and safety: But see how Christ urgeth and inflameth faith in them that be his, whereby they may become stronger and more confirmed. First, this woman being encouraged with that alluring fame of his, goeth after him and cried for help, not doubting but she should find him to be such an one, as she had heard him reported to be, and that she should forthwith intreat him for the recovery of her daughter; Christ in all respects sheweth himself unto her so, as though he would deceive all her trust, and make his report false, so that she might think with herself, Is this that man which is so bountiful and ready to help all? Dothhe so fulfil the most commendable report whichgoeth of him? Where doth there appear any thing like those things, which men have told me of him? They were deceived themselves, and deceived me also. He sheweth himself an enemy rather than a friend; why doth he not so much as speak a word, and friendly deny me help, if I be unworthy thereof? He holdeth his peace, and vouchsafeth not to speak a word, neither offereth his help; here surely Christ gave a grievous blow to the mind of the silly woman; so it is| an incomparable torment to them that believe, being in distress, when God sheweth himself such an one at their prayers, like

unto one that is angry, and whom they pray unto in vain, hiding so deeply his grace, that they now perceive nothing else, but that he will not perform those things which he hath promised, and that so he will shew his own words to be false. This truly happened to the Israelites at the Red-sea, and to many other excellent holy men; but what doth the woman? She removeth out of her sight and mind, that Christ sheweth himself so ungentle and hard to be intreated, she being constant and not moved hereat, persevereth in the trust of his goodness, whereof she had heard, and which she had conceived in her mind, suffering herself in no wise to be turned from it; so also must we do, we must trust unto the word alone, although God himself, and all creatures pretended otherwise than the word preacheth. But this is most hard to nature and reason, to be so utterly destitute, and to depend on the word of God, without any feeling of comfort, even when a man feeleth and tryeth all things to be contrary; God give unto us such a mind and faith, that we may so do, especially at the point of death and in extreme necessities. Secondly, as the cry and faith of this woman seemeth to have suffered repulse, the disciples come with their faith, doubting not but that they shall intreat the Lord, but when they think they shall make him more easy to be intreated, they find him to be much more hard repelling as it appeared, and as they thought, the faith and prayers both of the woman and also of themselves. Neither doth Christ hold his peace, and leave them in doubt, as before, but he seemeth plainly to deny that which they ask, saying, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; this stroke is much more grievous than the former, where not only the person is repelled, but all hope is cut off, namely the comfort of the intercession of all other Saints and Elect; for it is almost the last refuge to them that suffer distress and feel the indignation of God, to get themselves to good, godly and holy men, seeking for comfort and help, and as charity requireth, they find them ready and willing, but even they also some time do in vain ask help and succour, for neither are they

heard,

heard, so the case of them in distress become worse and more lamentable; so the afflicted and desolate may truly object unto Christ those words, wherein he hath promised that he will hear his Saints; 'if two of you 'shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall 'ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in 'heaven,' Mat. xviii. 19. Again, 'whatsoever ye shall ask 'in prayer, believing ye shall receive', Mat. xxi. 22. and many such like; but if to him that object these things, and ask him how he can go from his words and promises, he answers thus, I go not from my promises, I have not promised that I will hear all prayers, but the prayers of them that be mine, which are of the house of Israel, not of all whosoever. What thinkest thou, having taken such a repulse? Such an answer is like a flash of lightning, wherewith the heart and all trust is severed and broken in a thousand pieces: For what trust can there be left, when he heareth that that doth not pertain unto him, which because of the word of God he trusted to have obtained, but unto others. Here not so much as a word can be left if one do according as he feeleth. But what doth this woman? She doth not so fall from hope, she still sticketh to the words which she had heard of Christ, although he went about by this repulse, to wrest them out of her heart, she suffereth not herself to be frayed away, neither with his silence, neither with the hard answer, she continueth stedfastly in a sure confidence, believing that under this difficulty which Christ did pretend, that grace was as yet hidden and laid up for her, which she had heard reported of him, she cannot be brought as yet to judge Christ, not to be bountiful and gracious, and that he can deny the help which she desireth. This was to preserve strongly in faith; she followeth Jesus even into the house, as St. Mark writteth, she is instant upon him, falleth down before him, and saith, 'Lord help me.' Here the Lord giveth a deadly and the last blow, saying unto her face, 'that she 'is a dog, and unworthy to be partaker of the bread of 'the children.' What can she answer? For he seemed to signify in these words, that she is of the number of the damned, which can look for no part with the elect; this word

word seemeth eternal, and that cannot be gainsaid; for he which doth not pertain to the company of the elect by the ordinance of God, what may he hope to be left for him? This woman is not yet discouraged and past hope, but yieldeth to this judgment of the Lord, she confesseth of her own accord, that she is a dog, neither desireth she any thing but that which is wont to be given to dogs, namely, the crumbs which falleth from their master's table. She seems to have used great cunning: She takes Christ in his own words; he had made her like unto a dog, she acknowledgeth it, and desireth that he will only suffer her to be a dog, according to his own saying; what should he here do? How should he escape? He was now taken: For the crumbs under the table are granted to the dogs, to whom they are said to be due; here therefore Christ being overcome opens himself wholly, and granteth the desires of the woman, and sheweth that she is not a dog, but a true Israelite. These thing are written for the instruction and comfort of us, whereby we ought to learn, how deeply sometimes Christ hideth his grace from us, and how we must not judge of God, according to our own sense and opinion, but only according to his words; for we see here that although Christ sheweth himself very hard to this woman, yet he did not plainly deny to help her, but whatsoever he answered, howsoever it seemed a denial, yet it was not a denial, but left in doubt, leaving an entrance for faith, although but small. For he said not at first petition, I will not hear her, but he held his peace, neither promising nor denying help. So to the second petition, which the Apostles made, he dont say, she is not of the house of Israel; I cannot therefore perform that which she desireth, but he only saith, 'I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house 'of Israel;' leaving all things in doubt, between a plain grant and denial; so when she had the third time desired him, he saith not, thou art a dog, get thee hence-the bread of the children is not due unto thee, but he, saith, 'It is not meet to take the childrens bread, &c.' again leaving in doubt, whether she was a dog or no; nevertheless all these sayings seem outwardly rather a denial of help,

help, than room to hope, but in very deed they did contain in them rather a promise and hope, than a denial, yea, there was nothing but a promise, though most deeply hid and altogether secret under that silence, and answers, although they were hard, and a denial only founded outwardly. By these it is shewed how our heart is wont to be affected in temptation; for according as that feeleth in temptation, so Christ here behaveth himself; it feeleth all things to be denied, when it is far otherwise; wherefore it is requisite, that leaving his own feeling, by a sure faith in the word of God, it conceive and hold fast the promise of help deeply hidden under the denial, and yield to the sentence of God towards us, as this woman did, so shall we overcome and take the Lord in his words, that he cannot but help us; so that if we feel in our conscience at any time God rebuking us, pronouncing us sinners, and unworthy of the kingdom of heaven, then we feel as it were Hell, and it seems unto us that we are past all hope and recovery for ever: Then if we had the skill of this woman, that we could take the Lord in his own judgment, and say, yea, Lord, I am a sinner, and altogether unworthy of thy grace, but thou hast promised forgiveness to sinners, neither didst thou come to call the righteous but as Paul saith, to save sinners, he truly should bring to pass, that the Lord should be forced, even by his own judgment to have mercy upon him: So did Manasses, when being penitent, He prayed for pardon, as we read in his prayer: He yielded to the judgment of God, acknowledging himself a most grievous sinner, and so he bound God with his promise which had promised forgiveness of sin to sinners, not to the righteous. The same also did David observe. Psal. li. 4. 'Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this 'evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when 'thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.' For that purchases us displeasure, that we disdain to suffer the judgment of the Lord, and against our wills, yield unto his sentence, when he pronounceth us sinners; such a hard thing is it to acknowledge sins, and to embrace the judgment

judgment of God; we all confeſs ourſelves ſinners in words, but as ſoon as the Lord ſpeaketh in our heart, and pronounceth us ſinners, we do not abide by that which before we confeſſed, we had rather he counted righteous and free from that judgment. But it muſtneeds be, if God muſt be juſt in his words that thou be a ſinner, then alſo mayeſt thou uſe the right of ſinners, which God himſelf hath given unto them, namely to pray with a ſure expectation of forgiveneſs of ſins, then is it permitted unto thee not only to feed under the table of crumbs after the manner of dogs, but being a child of the houſhold, thou ſhalt ſit at the very table, God having now, how great ſoever he be, given unto thee according to thy deſire. Here we have a hiſtorical expoſition of this text, allegorically; for as it chanceth to this woman's daughter being ſick, for whom through faith ſhe obtained health by a miracle, ſo alſo it falleth out with us, when we are delivered from ſpiritual ſickneſs, to wit, ſins, which truly are a moſt grievous and troubleſome devil unto us; for as ſhe acknowledged herſelf a dog, ſo muſt we acknowledge our ſelves ſinners and judged unto Hell, the Lord pronouncing it, which if we can do as ſhe did, we ſhall be ſafe. We have already ſpoken elſewhere of other things whereof there might be occaſion to ſpeak out of this text, as how one may obtain grace and ſafety by the faith of another, as here it fell out to the daughters of this woman; this thing alſo that Chriſt's Diſciples, and the woman, are here examples of love, foraſmuch as none of them pray for, ſeek or do thoſe thing that are their own, but every one that which is another's is very manifeſt by itſelf, and eaſily acknowledged of every one, eſpecially ſeeing that we have ſo largely treated hereof in another place.

SER-

SERMON X.

Of Salvation by Grace, without Works.

Tit. iii. 4. to the 7. *But after that the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared*, &c.

PAUL having willed before, that all ſhould be put in mind to be obedient to ſuch as be in authority, and 'ready to every good work, to ſpeak evil of no man, to be 'no brawlers, but gentle, ſhewing all meekneſs unto all men,' &c. theſe few words being put between, that 'we our-'ſelves alſo were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, 'ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures,' &c. he added thoſe words which we have already mentioned, as if he ſhould ſay, Wherefore ſhould it grieve us to deſerve ſo well of all men, when God before hath dealt ſo bountifully, kindly and gently with us, with whom, with compariſon we are leſs, and have leſs of him deſerved than any, being compared to us, can be, or can deſerve of us? As God hath with exceeding bountifulneſs and kindneſs moſt gently behaved himſelf towards us, of his mercy granting and giving unto us all things; ſo ought we to do all things with charity and good will toward our neigbours, altho' they have otherwiſe deſerved, as we are like unto them, ſubject to ſin and evil deſires. Here we ſee how the Apoſtle will have us to be affected towards men: He will have us ſubject to them that be in authority, kind unto others, and ready to do well unto them with all gentleneſs, although they be evil, blind, and in error, that we grudge not to bear theſe things, and as much as lies in us, endeavour to do them good taking all in good part, conſidering that God hath ſo dealt with us, when we were evil and wicked, like unto them.

This word, *appeared*, we have elſewhere declared to ſignify the revelation of the goſpel, whereby Chriſt appeared in the world; altho' the unſkilfulneſs of miniſters hath wreſted it to the carnal nativity of Chriſt

He uſeth not here the word *grace*, which he uſed before, Tit. ii. 11. but inſtead thereof two other words of great comfort, [kindneſs, and love toward man] which he attributeth to our God. The firſt is that kindneſs, gentleneſs and ſweetneſs of conditions, wherewith we are with pleaſure converſant, and greatly delighted with their company, ſo that they by their gentleneſs and kindneſs allure all men to love them; for ſuch can ſuffer all without grief; they contemn no man; they repel none from them with bitter and hard conditions; acceſs unto them is not hard, but they are ſo open and ready, that every one dare reſort unto them, and deſire their help; and to conclude, they are ſuch men as the goſpel deſcribes Chriſt unto us, whom they declare to be gentle unto all, a deſpiſer of none, which denieth no benefit to any, pliant, prepared and ready to do good to all. So God alſo, by the goſpel, is preached and offered unto us wholly good, bountiful and ſweet, open to all, rejecting none, bearing all our ſins and offences, repelling no man with exceſſive ſeverity; for we read and hear nothing declared in the goſpel but meer grace and goodneſs, whereby he muſt mercifully hears us, and moſt gently handles us, and not any man according to his deſerts. This is the time of grace wherein it is granted to all to go with great boldneſs unto the throneof grace, as it is written, Heb. iv. 16. and Pſalm xxxiv. 5. 'They looked unto him, and were lightned, and their faces 'were not aſhamed;' that is, he will not ſuffer you to pray and come in vain, neither to return with confuſion. The other word is Philanthropia, love of men, as coveteouſneſs may be called love of money, as David, 2 Sam. i. 26. calleth the deſire of women, the love of women: And the philoſopers call certain living creatures Philanthropa, that is, loving toward men, as are horſes, dogs, dolphins; for theſe creatures are by nature delighted with man, they deſire his company, and willingly ſerve him as though they were moved with ſome reaſon and ſenſe of humanity. This name, and ſuch love, the Apoſtle here attributeth to our God, which Moſes alſo did, Duet. xxxiii. 2, 3. 'The Lord came 'from Sinai; from his right-hand went a fiery law. Yea,

'he

'he loved the people.' The meaning of the Apostle is this: Our God hath in the gospel shewed himself unto us not only bountiful, kind, gentle and sweet, which can bear and will receive all, but also he so loveth us, that of his own accord he joineth himself unto us, seeketh to have to do with us, voluntarily sheweth and offereth his grace unto us, and most gently embraceth as many as only do not refuse his grace and love, and desire to draw nigh unto him. What should he do more? Who cannot see why we count the gospel a preaching, joyful, and full of all consolation of God in Christ? For what can be spoken more lovingly and sweetly to a sinful and afflicted conscience than these words?

Now let no man restrain these two words (kindness and love towards man) to the persons, for God is plainly without respect of persons, bountiful to all, and a lover of all; otherwise, if we should here make a difference between men, we should acknowledge that some thing is received through our merits, and not all things through his mercy: Where it must be well marked, that God is said to be a lover of men, not of this or that nature only, not held with love of the person, and therefore these two, kindness and love toward man, must be taken after a general sort, that in all things the chief praise may be attributed to his mercy, that no man trust in his own merits, neither be terrified with sin, but altogether trust to his grace, which he voluntarily offereth unto us, with so great kindness and love toward us; for if any respect of persons might be had here, it should surely be had of them who are rich in the works of righteousness, but Paul expressly rejecteth these, saying, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done.' How much less then shall this love of our God toward men appear because of any man's wisdom, power, nobility, riches, or any such thing, when no respect is had of works of righteousness? Great is the grace of God toward us, which appeareth in the gospel, yea, and nothing but grace, which admitteth no merit at all of ours, utterly, taketh away all boasting and glorying, and setteth forth the glory of God alone, who freely giveth it

it unto us, being unworthy. So in this text these two, faith and love, are taught to receive benefits of God, and bestow them on our neighbours, which the scripture doth very often repeat, so that even the doctrine of salvation consisteth wholly in them, neither can one be separated from the other; for he that doth not firmly trust in the divine grace, cannot but be remiss, and slow to do well to his neighbour, and so witness the faintness and weakness of his faith, which is the fountain of all duties and benefits: On the contrary, the stronger faith that one is indued with, so much more dutifully, and with readier mind, he endeavoureth to deserve well of his neighbours. Therefore both doctrine and life, worthy of Christ, consist in these two, faith and love; whereby man is made as it were a mean between God and his neighbour, that he may receive of God from above, and give to his neighbours beneath, and be as it were a conduit through which the fountain of the divine goodness continually flows to his neighbours. And such men are like unto God, which in Christ receive of God whatsoever he hath, and do again by their good deeds declare themselves as it were the gods of other, and fulfil the prophesy of the prophet, Psalm lxxxii. 6. 'I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.' We are children of the most High by faith, whereby of nothing we are made the heirs of God: and we are gods by love, which maketh us beneficial to our neighbour; forasmuch as the nature of God is nothing but bountifulness, and Paul saith, 'the kindness and love of 'God toward man,' which he doth with incomparable plenty daily pour forth upon every one, as we see. We must only endeavour, that every one do nothing doubt that these things are spoken to him, that the bountifulness and love of God to manward is revealed and offered to every one, that by these words he may establish exercise, and strengthen his faith, being certain that they are most true, and that God both undoubtedly is, and always will be bountiful and loving toward him. If thou canst believe this, it will assuredly so come unto thee; thou mayest then with a full confidence pray and desire of him whatsoever thou wilt, and complain unto him of whatso-

whatsoever doth grieve thee or other. But if thou want this faith, it had been better for thee never to have heard any thing hereof, for thy by that infidelity thou reprovest of falshood these words, so precious and full of consolation and grace, making so light account of them as not believing that they be true; which surely is a great contempt and dishonour of God, that scarce a more grievous sin can be committed of thee. On the contrary, if thou be indued with this faith it cannot be but that thy heart being thereby cheered, should even as it were laugh and leap for the holy joy in God, because void of all care and trouble, and be made above measure confident; for how can any discouragement, any whit of sorrow remain in that heart, which doubteth not that God is gracious and bountiful unto it, and beareth a singular affection of love toward it, that it is a delight and pleasure unto him to do it good, and enjoy it as a freind? Surely the heart is necessarily delighted with this spiritual joy and pleasure, or undoubtedly it wanteth faith. Paul in the epistle to the Galatians calleth this, to receive the Holy Ghost by the gospel; for the gospel is so pleasant a preaching of the grace and goodness of God, that while it is preached and heard, it bringeth the Holy Ghost with it, in like manner as the beams of the sun do naturally bring heat with them. How could the Apostle use more pleasant and sweet words? I dare say that I have in the whole scripture read none more pleasant, and so sweet words of the grace of God as these two, *Chrestos*, *Philanthropia*, that is, kindness and love toward man; in which the grace of God is so described, as whereby he doth not only forgive our sins, but doth also desire to be conversant with us, and is ready to do the part of a very friend toward us, voluntarily offering himself to help us in all things, also to bestow more benefits upon us than we can desire or ask, that we may presume of him no otherwise than of a most near and familiar friend, of whom we may obtain all things, in whose eyes we are most dear and even delightful. Think in thy mind of a most perfect friend, which hath fulfilled all the parts of friendship toward thee, and thou shalt have after a sort of form, although yet far unlike, of

the divine goodneſs and kindneſs, which is here attributed to our God, by the name of kindneſs and love toward man; but when thou haſt a ſound faith in this kindneſs and love toward man, and thereby doſt live in thy God, ſo bountiful, gracious, and gentle to thee, rejoiceſt and art full of all good things, being certain of his continual grace; what ſhouldſt thou do any longer in earth? what in this life? Thou canſt not in this caſe be idle, as ſurely that love of God, and pleaſure which thou enjoyeſt in him, will not ſuffer thee to be idle. Thou ſhalt be inflamed with a marvellous ſtudy and deſire to do what things ſoever thou canſt know will be an honour unto thy God, ſo loving and bountiful unto thee, and will turn to praiſe, glory and thankſgiving unto him. Thou ſhalt have no choice of works, thou ſhalt feel no compulſion of the law, having a moſt ready will and pleaſure to do whatſoever things thou ſhalt know to be acceptable unto God, whether they be contemptible or noble, ſmall or great, thou ſhalt count them alike; but firſt of all it ſhall be thy deſire, that this bleſſed knowledge of God be common alſo to the reſt, whereupon by and by thy love will here ſhew itſelf, and will attempt all means to make this truth of ſalvation manifeſt unto all, it will publiſh and repeat it whereſoever it ſhall be able, rejecting and condemning whatſoever others teach or ſay, that agreeth not with this truth. Whereby it will come to paſs, that Satan and the world, which hear nothing ſo willingly as this truth, and cannot abide that their things ſhould be condemned, will riſe againſt thee with all their might, will by and by trouble thee; all the great, learned, rich and mighty of the world will condemn thee of hereſy and madneſs, and will leave no means unattempted until if they be able, they have diſpacht thee of thy life. Thus with Chriſt thy Lord thou ſhalt be perſecuted, and ſuffer extreme ignominy, thy body, life, goods, name, friends, and all things being brought unto peril, until they have thruſt thee from them out of this life into the eternal and bleſſed life: In the mean time thou muſt ſuffer all theſe things with a patient mind, and take them

them in good part, losing none of the spiritual joy which thou hast of Christ in thy God, and for thy part shewing to thy persecutors all kindness and love, being always mindful, that thou a little before was not much unlike them, before God; all which things thou shalt do throughfaith and love, altho'they exceed the strength of nature. And this indeed is a trueChristian life, wherein thou dost endeavour to do so to others, as God hath done to thee. 'Not by works of righteousness which we 'havedone.'In these words theApostle signified thatwhich we have not said, and proveth it as it were by rendring a reason; for if the bountifulness and love of God to man hath appeared, and hath saved us of his mercy, and not becausе of our own righteousness, yea, we being by all means unworthy, and subject to innumerable sins, it is meet that we also do good to them that have not deserved so much of us, and are unworthy thereof; for we which are become the sons of God must resemble God our Father, and bestow benefits according to our ability, as well upon our enemies and persecutors, as upon our friends: Whereof Christ also hath admonished us, Mat. v. 44. "Love your enemies, that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on theunjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" Now the Apostle doth not only expressly condemn us for evil works, but saith, 'Not by work of righteousness,'or, which wehave done in righteousness. Where he also rejecteth those works, which he counted righteous, and were thought both of us and others to have been done in righteousness, when they were so far from being righteous, that they made us unworthy of the grace of God, and more unfit to receive it, for they are deceitful works, whereunto we add this sin, that we think them righteous, and trust in them, whereby God is provoked to anger more than can be said, even us our enemies are wont to move us to anger, when they will avouch those things to be just, wherein they do unjustly; but even as God, when we,

being unwiſe, by error moved him to anger, counting our ſins works of righteouſneſs, did not therefore reject us, but of his meer mercy delivered us from this error and ſin; ſo we neglecting the fooliſhneſs and dotage of our adverſaries, whereby they contend that ſins are to be counted for righteouſneſs, ought nevertheleſs of meer love, having no reſpect of evil or good deſires, to be beneficial unto them, and endeavour to do them good in all things, looking for fruit of our benefits, not to them, but of God alone. Let theſe things ſuffice to have been ſpoken for a compendious and general expoſition of this text.

Now let us alſo briefly weigh the words, wherein he ſetteth forth and commendeth the grace of God. Firſt, he ſo greatly extolleth it, that in reſpect of it he condemneth all our good works and righteouſneſs; neither doth he condemn a ſmall thing, when he condemneth our righteouſneſs or righteous works, the moſt excellent thing that man can have in earth; for if all men with all their might ſhould labour and endeavour to attain to moſt exact prudence, wiſdom, and liberty of mind and will, which we read that ſome philoſophers and princes have done, as Socrates, Trajanus, and many others, whoſe fame the whole world hath long ſince ſpread abroad, both by word and writing; nevertheleſs all ſuch wiſdom, and all ſuch virtues, are nothing but ſin before God; foraſmuch as they are not done in and by the grace of God. Doers of ſuch virtues are ignorant of God, and therefore they cannot honour him by their ſtudies and endeavours; they think they have all things of themſelves, when no man can have any good thing at all, but of his grace alone, which the goſpel preacheth: ſo Paul glorieth, that he, before he knew Chriſt, lived a blameleſs life, and was more zealous toward the law, than thoſe of his age; that he alſo thought, that he did a thing acceptable to God, by perſecuting the Chriſtians, who condemned that blameleſs life which he led; but afterward, when he had learned Chriſt, he ſaith, that he counteth that righteouſneſs to be but dung, that he might be found, not in ſuch righteouſneſs, but in Chriſt

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by faith, Phil. iii. 6. The same thing he witnesseth, and treateth of at large, in the Epistles to the Galatians and Colossians: Here therefore is condemned all boasting of free-will, man's strength, righteousness, and good works; and it is concluded, that they are all nothing but sin, and certain destruction, although they have a fair shew; that they are saved only by the grace of God, as many of us as believe, and call for it, with acknowledging of our own vanity and perdition. Now we must accustom ourselves to the scripture, which maketh mention of two sorts of righteousness, one human, which Paul here and in many other places hath mentioned; the other divine, even that grace of salvation, which justifieth us by faith, whereof he speaketh in the end of this text: 'That being justified by his grace, 'we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal 'life,' Tit. iii. 7. Here thou seest plainly, that the grace of God is our true righteousness, whereby we are justified which is therefore called the righteousness of God, for that it is given unto us of God, and made ours, when we are made partakers thereof by faith: Of this he speaketh also, Rom. i. 17. In the gospel 'is the righteous-'ness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.' And, Gen. xv. 6. Abraham 'believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righ-'teousness.' Whereupon the scripture concludeth, that no man is counted righteous before God, but he that believeth, as the Apostle testifieth, where he recites that saying of Habakkuk, 'The just shall leave by faith:' Soit appeareth, that faith, grace, mercy, truth, righteousness, are all the same which God worketh in us by Christ and the gospel. Whereupon it is said, Psal. xxv. 10. 'All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth;' for those are the ways of the Lord in which we, observing his commandments, do walk, and he again in us; now those ways must be directed by his mercy and truth alone, not by our strength and industry, forasmuch as our ways, being ordered hereby, are nothing but vanity before God, and do deserve his wrath, according to that which the Lord saith, Isaiah lv. 9. 'As the heavens 'are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than

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'your ways.' As if he should say, Your righteousness is earthly and of no value, wherefore ye must bid it farewel and walk in mine, if ye hope for salvation. 'But according 'to his mercy he saved us:' It is marvellous how the credit of these words can stand, wherein the Apostle affirmeth, that we are already saved, although living yet in earth, and therefore in continual misery. But he did so speak, that he might more fully express the power of the divine grace, and the nature of faith against hypocrites, who as though salvation were yet far off, do in vain endeavour to obtain it by their works; for Christ hath already saved us; he hath performed all things which are required hereunto, that we may be saved; he hath overcome and subdued sin, death, hell, &c. so that he hath left nothing for any man to care for; he hath also given all these things to us in baptism, that whosoever believeth in Christ, hath performed them, hath them together in the same moment, he hath need of nothing more unto salvation, but faith alone, that he may firmly believe that these things are so performed. But mark what incomparable riches of his grace God hath poured upon us in baptism, who hath delivered us even from those works, whereby those foolish holy ones go about to merit heaven, and to be saved: for we must have heaven, and be saved, before we can do any good works, for that works cannot merit heaven, but heaven being before given of meer grace, causeth us to do good works and that for no hope of merit or reward, but only to the profit of our neighbours, and the glory of God, until this body be delivered from sin and death.

Wherefore, all the life of a Christian, after baptism is nothing else but an expectation of salvation, and felicity to be revealed, which they that believe in Christ do now possess, although hidden. They have all things now certainly, but they are yet hid in faith, which when it is changed, knowledge being revealed, all things as they now have them, shall appear, which shall come to pass, when pleasant and wish'd for death cometh, according to that saying of John, 1 John iii. 2. 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it 'doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know,

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'that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for 'we ſhall ſee him as he is. And every man that hath 'this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.' Wherefore ſuffer not thyſelf to be deceived, and to be ſeduced from this truth by thoſe hypocrites, which contemning faith, do falſly affirm that ſalvation is far from thee, and teach thee to endeavour in vain to attain unto it by thy works; it is in thyſelf, if thou believe that all things are performed by Chriſt, even as he himſelf witneſſeth, 'The kingdom of Godis within you,' Luke xvii.21. So that all our lifeafter baptiſm ought tobe nothing elſe but an expectation that that ſhould be revealed which is already in us, and that we may apprehend, as we are apprehended as Paul ſaith, Phil. iii. 12.' But I follow 'after, if that I apprehend that ſo, which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus,' that is, that I may at length ſee thoſe things which are given me, being as yet in the ſhut cloſet of faith; he coveteth, and burneth with deſire to ſee the treaſure which by faith he received both given and ſealed in baptiſm: whereupon he addeth in the ſame place; ver. 20. 'For our converſation is in heaven, from whence alſo we look for the ſaviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body.' Herewith alſo agreeth that which he ſaith, Gal. iv. 9. 'Ye know God,' and by and by he doth as it were correct that which he had ſaid, Yea, ſaith he, 'rather are known,' both which are true, although notafter the like ſort: we are nowknown of God, ſo that he comprehendeth us, and we indeedknow God, but we do not yet comprehend, for that our knowledge is as yet hidden and cloſed up in faith. He ſaith moreover, Rom. viii. 24. 'For we are ſaved by hope;' that is, we are ſaved, although we yet ſee it not, 'for what a man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we ſee not, then do we with patience wait for it.' Chriſt confirmeth this, Luke xii. 35, 36. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourſelves like unto men thatwait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comethand knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." In which

which words he only biddeth them that be histo be ready to look for him the bridegroom, as which are already saved, being admitted into the number of his ministers. Hereunto also pertaineth that which the Apostle saith, Tit. ii. 12. 13. 'We should live soberly, righteously, and 'godly in this present world; looking for that blessed 'hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and 'our Saviour Jesus Christ.' In these and such like places whereof thou may read many here and there in the holy scriptures, he witnesseth that we are already saved, and that it doth not behove, that a Christian man should first seek to attain to salvation by his works: this devilish doctrine blindeth the eyes of Christians, extinguisheth the knowledge of faith, and carrieth men from the way of truth and salvation. We must cleave unto that which the apostle here saith, 'He hath saved us according to 'his mercy,' and which he addeth to the end of the text, 'that we are heirs according to the hope of eternal life. We are now heirs, but that is hidden in faith, but we look with a certain hope, that hereafter it shall be revealed. And God will have us so to look for the revelation of this inheritance, and to live a certain time after baptism, that he may chastise our body by our ministry, and declare the power of his grace in fight against the flesh, the world and the devil, but especially for this cause, that by us he may help our neighbours, and both by doctrine, and also by our life which he liveth in us, may bring them to the communion of faith; and altho' he can do this by angels, yet it pleaseth him rather that it should be done by us men, that both the manner of faith may be the better known, and that all things may be done sweetly and lovingly: for if angels should always have to do with us, there should not be so much faith, neither should it be so pleasant, as when we are taught and guided by them that are partakers of our nature, whom we do better know, and with whom we do more familiarly associate ourselves; and so, that there may be some, by whom others also may be converted both by doctrine and good examples, it is not meet that we should by and by after baptism be taken into heaven, wherein notwithstanding we are already admitted citizens.

citizens. Hereupon if one weigh all things rightly, it cannot be doubted, that it is a practice and miracle of Satan and Antichrist, that so much is spent for purgatory's sake, such faith as this being put quite out of mens minds; for men are taught by their works to save themselves from purgatory, or at least to deliver themselves from thence, as though salvation were not yet given us, and it were necessary to come unto it by other means than by faith alone, which how it disagreeth with the scripture and a Christian life, there is no man that doth not see, but he that seeth nothing in the scripture; for thus the holy scriptures do teach every where, that whoever doth not receive salvation by mere grace, through faith before all works, he shall never be partaker thereof; and that whosoever refer their good works, not to the profit of their neighbour but to their own advantage, being more careful of their own salvation than of their neighbours, have no good works at all: all the works of these are void of faith, and infected with pernicious error. It had been greatly to be wished that purgatory had never been invented, and no mention made thereof in the pulpit, for it hath been such cause of hindrance to Christian verity and sincere truth, as cannot be recovered; for we see it brought to pass by the means of Satan, that almost all prayer are directed only to purgatory, with this ungodly and pestilent opinion, whereby miserable men think that they shall be redeemed from thence, and obtain salvation by the works of men; whereby the riches of baptism and faith are had in no reputation, and they at the last, of Christians are become heathens. O most pernicious abomination! Christians should be taught as Christ and Paul teach them, that after baptism and absolation from sin they should so live, that they should be ready every hour to receive death, with desire looking for the revelation of salvation already received. Now by the opinton of purgatory they are made secure and slothful, so that they defer the study of godliness even to their death, and think by contrition and confession they shall amend all things, as though there were some sins remaining for which they must go into purgatory, they hope that by masses

masses for the departed, and other bequests they are persuaded to make in their testaments or last wills, they shall be redeemed out of purgatory; but these miserable men are in these things utterly deceived, and shall at length find them to be far otherwise. 'By the washing 'of regeneration.' He setteth forth the grace of God given to us in baptism, with words very full of praise and commendation: he calleth baptism a washing, whereby not the feet and hands, but the whole man is at once washed, purified and saved. There is need of nothing but only faith in this grace of God, that it may remain and be acknowledged the work of grace alone, that we are saved without all our works and merits, and so also there may remain in us pure love, praise, giving of thanks, and glory of the divine mercy, without all glory and pleasing of ourselves in our own strength and endeavour, as it hath been often said and at large. Human righteousness is also a washing, but not whereby the whole man is so washed, but that Pharisaical washing, whereby only the apparel and vessels which are outward, are made clean, whereof it is spoken, Mat. xxiii. Whereby it cometh to pass that men seem unto themselves pure, but inwardly they remain full of filthiness. Therefore he called baptism not a corporal or outward washing, but the washing of regeneration or new birth, by which not those things that are outward are washed, and only the outward man made clean, but the whole nature of man is altered and changed into another nature; that is, the carnal nativity is thereby destroyed, with all the inheritance of sins and perdition. Whereby he again witnesseth, that our salvation is given us at once, so that it is not to be gotten by works; for not one or two members are wont to be born, as the hands or feet, but the whole man, which cannot work this, that he may be born a man, but is first born that he may work. Likewise our works, do not purify or save us, but when as before we are pure, justified, and saved, we work freely those things, which maybe profit to our neighbour, and honour to God. And this is the simple and pure knowledge of the divine grace, whereby a man learneth to know both God and himself; to praise God

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alone, to humble and caſt down himſelf; to truſt in God, to deſpair of himſelf. This doctrine of ſalvation they marvelloufly hinder, which urge men with laws, precepts, and works, and teach them to ſeek thereby to be ſaved. And the renewing. That this waſhing and new birth may be more fully underſtood, he hath added, the renewing, that thou mayeſt underſtand, that he that is truly baptized, is become a new man, and a new creature, endued with a new diſpoſition, which now is far otherwiſe affected, loveth, liveth, ſpeaketh and doth far otherwiſe, than he was wont or could before. So the Apoſtle ſaith, Gal. vi. 15. 'For in Chriſt Jeſus neithercircumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion,' that is, no works of the law are of any value or importance, 'but a new creature.' As if he ſhould ſay, ſalvation cannot be perfected by joining together certaingood works, but the whole man muſt be at once renewed, and his nature changed, whereupon true good works will follow of themſelves, not by piece meal, but together with great plenty. Of this new birth, whereby the whole man is renewed, Chriſt ſpeaketh, John iii. 1. 'Except a 'man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God.' Here again it manifeſtly appeareth, that nothing is here done by our works, but that it behoveth, that man, how great ſoever he be, muſt die, and be changed into another, which is done in baptiſm, if we believe. The condemned alſo ſhall be born again in the laſt day, but they ſhall not be renewed, they ſhall remain unclean, as they were here, and as they were born of Adam. Therefore that he might ſpeak rightly of baptiſm, he calleth it the waſhing of the new birth, whereby they that are born again are alſo renewed; of this new birth many things are to be found here and there in the ſcripture, becauſe of which God calleth his word and goſpel a womb, as Iſaiah xlvi. 3. 'Hearken unto me, O houſe of 'Jacob, and all the remnant of the houſe of Iſrael, which 'are born by me from the belly, which are carried from 'the womb.' He therefore that believeth the goſpel, is as it were conceived in the womb of God, and from thence born a new man, and like unto God; whereof we will

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in another place speak more; now it shall be sufficient, to have learned by these words, how our works are nothing in fulfilling the commandments of God, and that it is a mad thing to attribute here never so little to our own strength, seeing that it is faith alone, whereby man is at once born again, and renewed; wherefore understand this, that good works must follow a new creature, but to attain unto righteousness and that new creature they are able to help nothing at all; no otherwise as the grace of God wont to renew man, than as if God should turn some dry and withered block into a new green and flourishing tree, which may afterward bring forth fruit plentifully; for the grace of God is a great, strong, very mighty, and marvellous effectual thing, it lyeth not in the mind, as the Schoolmen dream: it sleepeth not, or is born, as a painted table beareth a picture: it self-beareth, guideth, urgeth draweth, changeth, and worketh all things in men, so that every one may feel and have experience of it, itself indeed is hid, but the works of it cannot be hid, but do witness of it, as the leaves and fruits do of the tree, of what nature it is; wherefore the Schoolmen Thomas and Scotus do ungodly detract from it, who attribute no more unto it, than that it doth adorn the works of nature, and is a help that they be brought to perfection. For it doth not adorn or help only, but it alone worketh those things that be good, neither doth it work them only, but doth rather change and renew the person; for it exhibiteth the washing of the new birth, and of renewing not of works only, but much rather of the whole man; he that shall preach these things of grace shall truly and fully commend it: which Paul endeavoured to do when he said, he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost. Nothing can be done here by joining of works together, the nature must needs be changed, whereupon it cometh to pass, that they that truly believe must suffer many things; for the grace worketh in them, and declareth it self present: Hereunto pertaineth that saying of the cxi. Psal. 'The works of the Lord are great sought out of 'all them that have pleasure therein.' What are these works?

works? We are they, by grace in baptism made the great, new, and regenerate works of God; is it not a great thing for a man by and by to be saved, and delivered from sins, death, and hell? Therefore he saith, 'Sought out of all them that have pleasure therein;' for by this new birth God hath found out, and done whatsoever men can desire; for what else do men covet and desire, but to obtain salvation, to be delivered from sin, death and hell?

'Of the holy Ghost.' Lastly, that he may the more express the greatness and virtue of grace, he attributeth this washing of regeneration, and renewing to the holy Ghost; for this washing is so great, and of so weighty importance, that no creature but the holy Ghost alone is able to perform it; but how much, most excellent Paul, dost thou condemn free will, the great good works of the proud holy ones, that is, the merits of hypocrites? In how high a place dost thou set our salvation, and again, how dost thou bring it down to us, and place it near us, yea, even with us? How purely and sincerely dost thou set forth grace in these words? Wherefore work whatsoevtr and how much soever thou wilt, it is impossible for a man to be renewed, and the person changed (without which no works acceptable to God can be done) but by the washing of 'regeneration 'and renewing of the holy Ghost.' We may plainly see in those hypocritical counterfeiters of works, that thou shalt find none harder, none prouder, none so rash and hasty spirits; for they are broken, and not renewed, obdurate, obstinate, confirmed by continuance, covering indeed, and somewhat adorning that old Adam, but there doth not appear any change of nature in them, they continue still in the oldness of their corrupt flesh. O what a pestilent people is this, and in how great indignation of God are they, when as in the mean time they think that they sit in God's lap? Now whereas the Apostle attributeth this washing of regeneration and renewing to the holy Ghost, he saith the same which Christ doth, John iii. 5. 'Except a man be 'be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into 'the kingdom of God.' For that which Christ signified by

water, the Apostle calleth the washing, so both make mention of new birth, and of the Holy Ghost; and we must mark that that which is spoken here of the Holy Ghost, both by Christ, and the Apostle, must not be referred to that Papistical confirmation, as they call it, for both of them referred to baptism, that which is here mentioned concerning the holy Ghost, who when the body is washed with water doth himself work the new birth, and renewing by faith, which Christ called, to be born again of the Spirit. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, that the Apostles did often lay their hands on them that were baptised, and that so the holy Ghost came upon them by a visible sign which the Papists also snatch to their confirmation; but as that was done, that the believers might by a visible sign be endued with the holy Ghost, to preach the Gospel in divers languages, so it continued only the time thereof, until the doctrine of the Gospel was commended to the world by sufficient signs, wherefore it is now long since worn out of use; but that a certain ceremony hath come from thence even unto us, of laying hands on them, which are ordained ministers or preachers, which is now brought into an ungodly and pernicious use; but of these things in another place. 'Which he shed on us abundantly.' See how notable the Apostle setteth forth grace, he saith not that the holy Ghost was given, but shed, and not that only, but shed abundantly; for he cannot sufficiently extol and magnify grace, and the wor[illegible] thereof, and we, alas, count it vile in respe[illegible]orks; it were a dishonour to God and to his Spirit, if when he hath plentifully shade it upon us; there should as yet be something wanting. necessary to righteousness and salvation, which we are able to perform, as though the works of so incomparable grace could not be sufficient; and Paul surely might be reproved of lying, which had not spoken all things whereby we must be justified and saved, when he affirmeth that he doth it, but as he writeth, so it is; no man can attribute so great things to this washing and regeneration, no man can so much presume of them, but greater things may be attributed unto them, and thou oughtest to promise to thyself more things of them;

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no man shall believe so great things, but he shall receive greater; forasmuch as those good things which God hath given, are so great and so unspeakable, he would have them here come unto us, being included and hid in his words and faith; for the nature of our present life cannot bear them being manifest, and therefore it must perish, when they begin to be revealed, that man may by these inestimable riches, which he now possesseth by faith, be as it were swallowed up, and vanish away; we are already abundantly justified by faith, without all our own merit, therefore Christ saith, John iii. 16. 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only be-'gotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should 'not perish, but have everlasting life.' Behold, they that believe, have already everlasting life, and therefore undoubtedly are justified and holy without all their own labour or means, that thou mayest see, that nothing but grace and mercy is plentifully poured upon us, and that our works could avail nothing hereunto. Thou wilt perhaps say, thou canst not preach sufficiently, that the grace and mercy of God doth work all things in us, and that no respect is to be had of our works, to the attaining of salvation; and how cometh it to pass then, that the Scripture so often witnesseth that they shall be saved which have wrought good works? As John v. 29. 'And shall come forth, they that have done good, 'unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done 'evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.' And Rom. ii. 7, 8. 'To them, who by patient continuance in well do-'ing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; e-'ternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do 'not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indig-'nation, and wrath.' We read many sentences here and there in the Scripture like unto these; I answer, as the words sound, so take them without all gloss, for it is even so, they that do well shall be saved, they that do otherwise, shall be condemned; but herein many err from the truth of the Scripture, in that they judge works according to the outward appearance, contrary to the Scripture, which teacheth, that no man can do good, who is not himself good before, and by works no man can become

good, but works take their goodness of the worker, and he becometh good by the washing of regeneration, and by nothing else; this Christ meant, Matt. vii. 18. 'A 'good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit: neither can a 'corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.' Wherefore make the tree either good or evil, and it will bring forth like fruits; hypocrites oftentimes do works like to the works of the godly, yea, sometime have a goodlier shew, for they diligently pray, fast, give alms, and pretend a marvellous holiness; but Christ calleth these sheep's clothing, wherewith most hurtful wolves are clothed and hidden; for none of them is of a true, humble, meek, and bountiful heart, which they chiefly declare when they are rebuked, when their holiness is reproved; for then bring they forth their natural fruits, whereby they are known: those are rash judgments, impatience, stubbornness, obstinacy, slandering, and such like; it is true therefore, he that doth well shall be saved, that is, his salvation shall be manifest, but he can do no good at all, if he be not before regenerate by the washing of the new birth; for what good works can one work in the oldness of the flesh, and by the strength proceeded from Adam, they are the good works which Paul here condemneth, saying, 'Not by the works of righteousness 'which we have done.' They are indeed good works done in righteousness, but not before God, who first hath respect to the person, and then to the works, as we read Gen. iv. that he had respect first to Abel, then to his sacrifice, as he first turneth himself from Cain, and then from his sacrifice, altho' according to the outward appearance it was as good a sacrifice and work, as the sacrifice of Abel. 'Thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour.' This he addeth that he may keep us under the wings of Christ, as chickens are wont to be preserved under the wings of the hen; for thus Christ saith, Mat. xxiii. 37. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?" And hereby the nature of a true and right faith is taught; for it is nothing which some say, I believe in God almighty,

mighty, as the Jews and many others are wont, and do therefore receive corporeal benefits of God; it is a true and lively faith, whereby thou believeſt in God, howbeit by Jeſus Chriſt. Firſt, that thou doubt not that God is become a merciful father unto thee, which hath pardoned all thy ſins, and in baptiſm hath adopted thee for his ſon and heir, that thou mayeſt certainly know that thou art ſaved; again thou muſt alſo know this, that that was not done freely, neither without ſatisfaction made to the divine juſtice, for their can be no place in thee for the divine grace and mercy to work ſalvation, and to give thee eternal good things, unleſs the juſtice of God be before moſt fully ſatisfied; for Chriſt witneſſeth, Mat. v. 18. 'One jot, or one tittle ſhall in 'no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.' That which is ſpoken of the grace and goodneſs of God, cannot come but to them which do moſt purely and exactly obſerve his commandments, according to that ſaying, Mich. ii. When as the Jews did preſume of the goodneſs of God towards them, and did always promiſe unto themſelves peace, ſaying, how can God be always angry, 'is the ſpirit of the Lord ſtraitned?' It is anſwered them; are not my words good unto him that walketh uprightly? Wherefore it ſhall be lawful for none to attain unto the abundance of grace, unleſs he hath before moſt exactly ſatisfied the commandments of God, Now it hath been ſpoken at large, that our works are nothing before God, whereby we cannot fulfil ſo much as the leaſt commandment of God, how much leſs ſhall we be able ſo to ſatisfy the juſtice of God, that we may become worthy of his grace? Moreover if we were able to fulfil all the commandments of God, and in all things to ſatisfy his juſtice, notwithſtanding we had not as yet deſerved grace and ſalvation, neither ſhould he therefore owe it unto us, for that he may by the right of creation require as due ſervice, all thoſe things of us his creatures, created to live unto him; wherefore it ſhould yet come of grace and mercy, whatſoever ſhould comefrom him unto us: this Chriſt declared very well, Luke xvii. 7, 8, 9, 10. "Whichof you having a ſervant plowing or feeding cattle, will ſay unto him by and

by, when he is come from the field, Go, and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do." Seeing then that heaven is given of grace, and for no merit, even unto those, if there were any such, which have done all things that were commanded them, according to that promise, 'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments:' what shall we boast of our good works, which although they were most absolute, yet would they be unworthy of heaven, but inasmuch as it is given us by the free and merciful promise? Hereupon (for that we must so satisfy the divine justice, and yet notwithstanding our works are not able to attain thereunto, whereunto if they should attain, yet should they deserve no grace or salvation, for that they are before due) God first gave unto us a man, which should satisfy the divine justice, for us in all things. Again, he hath by the same man bestowed this grace and bountifulness upon us, that altho' we without our own merit and worthiness, yea, having evil deserved and being unworthy, receive grace, yet it cometh not unto us altogether freely and without all merit, for we have it thro' the merit and satisfaction of Christ, whereupon Paul saith, Rom. v. 18. 'As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' That is, as without all our merit, and own work we fell into sin, being born sinners, so again without all our merit and means, we are redeemed from sins, by the washing of the spirit, born again the sons of God, partakers of grace and salvation; and this is the cause why the Apostle where he speaketh of faith and grace, is wont to add, by Jesus Christ; whereby surely he would give us to understand, that none should count it sufficient, if he say, I believe in God, Christ being neglected; he that

that truly believeth, must acknowledge, that his faith cannot be acceptable to God, yea, that it can be no faith at all, if all the commandments of God be not before fulfilled, which seeing it is above thy ability, (and if it were not, yet notwithstanding thou have performed nothing, but that thou oughtest, and have as yet merited nothing, having fulfilled even all the commandments of God) thou hast need of another, which in all things may satisfy the divine justice for thee, and may also merit heaven for thee; now this other is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath for thee fulfilled the whole law, and merited for thee, that God now according to his justice cannot but give heaven unto thee, and in all things acknowledge thee for his son and heir: and this is a true and sound faith, which trusteth in God by Christ, and is certain that by his merit it hath already received of God salvation, which shortly after shall be revealed with blessed abundance of felicity; neither can any other be called Christian faith, but that whereby it is believed, that by Christ doth come unto us both satisfaction, which we owe to the justice of God, and the gift of salvation, which we ourselves by no means, if the law could even be fulfilled of us, can merit; whereupon Paul, Rom. iv. 25. saith, 'Christ 'was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for 'our justification.' That is, by Christ we have received not only remission of our sins, but also, that before God we are accounted righteous, and the sons of his grace: to the same effect also tendeth that which he saith, Rom. iii. 25. 'Whom God hath set forth to be a 'propitiation, thro' faith in his blood, to declare his righ-'teousness for the remissions of sins that are past, thro' 'the forbearance of God.' Where again we learn, that it is true faith, which trusteth in the blood of Christ, and believeth that thereby it shall obtain grace; whereas that thou believest he hath shed his blood for thee, thou receivest satisfaction; in that thou acknowledgest him the reconciliation, thou confessest that by his merit the divine grace and salvation do come unto thee. We have all things without our own merit and means, but notwith-

without the merit and means of Christ, who hath for this cause shed his blood. Wherefore that we may allude unto the parable of Christ, we must contain ourselves under his wings, and not to trust in ourselves; flee out and contend to come unto God, otherwise we shall be a prey to the hellish kite; for as it hath been often said, our righteousness, our merits, yea, and our faith shall prevail nothing, without this our mediator Christ; and therefore he saith St. John xiv 6. 'No man 'cometh unto the Father but by me.' And in the whole Gospel what other things doth he, but endeavour to take us out of ourselves, and to transfer us to himself under his wings, that we may trust only in his satisfaction and merit? The same the Apostle also teacheth in the words following, Tit. iii. 7. 'That being justified by his 'grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope 'of eternal life.' He saith that we are justified, not by our own works, but by the grace of the same Jesus Christ. That is, we are therefore justified, for that Christ hath the grace of the Father, having fulfilled his will in all things, and thereby merited eternal life; for seeing that he hath no need of this merit, he giveth it unto us which do believe in him, that before God all his things may be imputed to us, and by them we may receive salvation. See, how rich a thing sound faith is, and how great good things it bringeth with it; see also how precious a thing the Gospel is, and how great a treasure it is to have it purely preached; and on the contrary, how great a disadvantage there is, where it is not preached, or not rightly preached, the inventions of men being mingled with it, or thrust in instead of it. Take heed therefore of such deceivers, and of their counterfeit faith, rest not in thyself, but get thee under the wings of Christ, keep thyself under his protection, trust that thou art heir of eternal life, not by thy own righteousness, or grace which thou hast received, but whereby he his righteous and acceptable before God: hereunto pertaineth this saying, Psal. xci. 4. 'He shall cover thee with his feathers, and 'under his wings shalt thou trust:' and in the song of Solomon, ii. 14. it is said, 'O my dove, that art in the clefts of

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'the rock, in the secret places of the stairs,' that is, in the wounds of Christ; and this indeed is a true Christian faith, which resteth not in itself as the Schoolmen dream, but reposeth itself wholly in Christ, and as it trusteth in him, so it resteth in him, having received eternal salvation. Whereas he saith that we are made heirs of eternal life according to hope, besides that he proveth, that we without all our own merits, by only hope of grace are born again heirs of eternal life, and do not become heirs by working whereof, we have already spoken at large, he also teacheth this, that our salvation and eternal life is as yet hid, although if we believe, we do verily possess it, and this body being put off, and the kingdom of Christ revealed, all things shall appear manifestly. The text fighteth most mightily, and with most plain words against all righteousness and good works of man's reason, and free-will, for the words are plain, 'Not by works of righteousness 'which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved 'us, by the washing,' &c. All which words do utterly overthrow our righteousness, attributeth all things to the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost, to Christ and his grace; how can there notwithstanding any presumption as yet remain in us? Wherefore let all sacred and prophane laws, have a fair shew; let all sacrificing Priests, Monks, and Nuns boast of themselves; let all religious and honest men and women seem goodly in outward appearance; let them even raise the dead; if faith in Christ be absent, whereof we have now spoken so much, all these things are to no purpose. These most false shews do as yet deceive the whole world, and seduce almost every one; they make the gospel obscure, and extinguish the faith of Christ; all their works and orders, although they appear goodly, and they think them to have merited never so much do avail no more unto salvation, than the works of beasts, or of artificers, whereby they do maintain themselves and theirs, yea, they do most hurtfully hinder it: therefore that I may conclude, take heed as much as thou art able, of these wolves, which under a fair pretence counter-

counterfeit themſelves ſheep, and learn and accuſtom thyſelf with a ſound faith to cleave unto Chriſt alone.

SERMON XI.

Of the Kingdom of God.

FOraſmuch as there is often made mention in the new Teſtament of theſe words, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Chriſt, and it is very profitable and expedient for a Chriſtian to know theſe, viz. that they are nothing elſe, but remiſſion of ſins, and grace preached and offered by the goſpel; for in this kingdom thou ſhalt find nothing but grace, goodneſs, pardon and forgiveneſs of ſins, love and gentleneſs: I therefore think it good to treat ſomewhat at large of the ſtate and kingdom, and of forgiveneſs of ſins, the kingdom of God, whereby he reigneth over all the faithful, and as a faithful king defendeth, puniſheth, rewardeth, guideth and directeth them, &c. they again from their heart truſt in him, ſuffer his fatherly chaſtiſement and correction with a patient mind, and always ſerve him through obedience, is not worldly or temporal, but ſpiritual; neither conſiſteth in meat and drink, or in any outward thing, but only in juſtification, quieting and conſolation of the heart and conſcience of man; wherefore it is nothing elſe but forgiveneſs and taking away of ſins, by which conſciences are defiled, troubled and diſquieted; for even as a wordly and temporal kingdom is ordained to this end, that men may live quietly and peaceably one with another; ſo the kingdom of God giveth theſe things ſpiritually, and deſtroyeth the kingdom of ſin, and is nothing elſe, but an aboliſhing and pardoning of offences, God reigneth in the hearts, inaſmuch as he worketh in them by his word, peace, quietneſs and conſolation; even as ſin, worketh the contrary, namely, unquietneſs, anguiſh, and all kind of evils. Herein God ſheweth his

his majesty and grace in this life, that he taketh away and pardoneth mens sins; and this is the kingdom of grace. Now when as sin with his guard, that is, Satan, death, and hell, shall trouble man no more, then at the last the kingdom of glory, and absolute felicity shall be. Hereupon it followeth, first, that the kingdom of God is ruled or governed by no law, no not by the law of God, much less by the laws of men, but only by the gospel, and faith in God, by which hearts are purified, comforted and quieted, whilst that the holy Ghost poureth out love and the knowledge of God into them, and maketh man as it were one thing and one spirit with God; so that his affection is set upon the same thing, he willeth and desireth the same thing, he seeketh and loveth the same thing that God doth; neither standeth the case otherwise here, than it doth between two friends, which bare good will to one another, and agree one with another in all things. Hereof it cometh, that a man in this kingdom of God is perfect, merciful, pitiful and bountiful towards his neighbour, seeing that he knoweth by the instinct of the holy Ghost, that God is of the same affection toward him, and toward all men, and doth pour forth his goodness plentifully; such affection of God no man can know by the law, but only by the spirit, and word of the gospel. None therefore shall obtain quietness, comfort, and peace of the heart, or attain unto the kingdom of God by any law; and they which prescribe many laws, do withdraw men from the kingdom of God to the kingdom of sin, wherein is nothing else, but unquietness, anguish affliction, adversity, and all kind of evils, tormenting the conscience. On the contrary, in the kingdom and knowledge of God, the Lord Christ peace, and consolation of hearts.

Secondly, In this kingdom of God the Lord Christ reigneth no otherwise than as a master of an hospital amongst the sick, poor, and diseased; for unto this kingdom none pertain, but sinful and miserable men, unto whom their sins are forgiven, whereupon Christ saith in the gospel, Luke vi. 24. 'Woe unto you that are 'rich: for ye have received your consolation.' But on the contrary,

contrary, the poor, miſerable, and ſuccourleſs receive comfort and joy by the goſpel; for Chriſt came to call ſinners only, and not the righteous, that all glory may be referred to God alone, for he that forgiveth ſins of his grace and meer mercy: ſuch aboliſhing or putting away of ſin, wherein Chriſt reigneth as a King of the kingdom of God, is done of him after two ſorts: firſt thus, in that he remitteth, pardoneth and covereth ſins, ſo that God will not regard, remember or revenge them, although they be in a man. As it is in Pſalm xxxii. 1, 2. "Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered. Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile. And in Iſaiah xliii. 25. God ſaith, I, even I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake and will not remember thy ſins." Secondly thus, in that he purgeth or rather ſcoureth ſins by divers croſſes and afflictions; for they are two things, to remit ſins, and to weaken the body of ſin that it may not reign in us. If a man believe and is baptiſed, then all his ſins are forgiven him, but afterward ſin muſt be ſcoured or abated by manifold affliction and mortification, as long as he ſhall live; ſin ſticketh in us, as long as the mortal body remaineth, but for Chriſt's ſake it is not imputed in the wrath of God, but freely remitted, and the force thereof diminiſhed by his fatherly chaſtiſement: in ſuch chaſtiſement for their amendment, true Chriſtians have great comfort peace and joy, as St. Paul ſaith, Rom. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. "Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: By whom alſo we have acceſs by faith into this grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only ſo, but we glory in tribulations alſo, knowing that tribulation worketh patience: and patience, experience: and experience, hope: and hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the holy Ghoſt, which is given unto us." So thou haſt two things to be conſidered: the firſt, that in this kingdom of God we are juſtified. The ſecond that by tribulation and affliction we are glorified, without which we cannot attain

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to glory. Thirdly, good Christians are not known by this, when any suffer manifold tribulation and chastisement that the body of sin may be weakened, and they brought to amendment; for herein they do altogether differ among themselves, one suffereth this, another one is chased thus, another otherwise, so that even the very apostles did not love and suffer alike: but they are known in forgiveness of sin, or justification by faith, wherein God turneth his anger from them, and receiveth them unto grace, and counteth them for his dear children, and imputethno sin to them unto condemnation. Herein are all alike, even as all live under one heaven. Wherefore they do most grosly err and stumble, which measure Christians by manners, works and the outward manner of living, even as the Pharisees were wont to do, and did therefore find fault with Christ, for that he did not observe their ceremonies, but was a friend of Publicans and sinners. As that Pharisee said within himself, Luke vii. 39. 'This man, if he we were a prophet, 'would haveknown who, andwhat manner of womanthis 'is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner.' Here now an example of those things which are before said: a physician which goeth about to cure the sick, doth first promise him health by the assistance and help of God, whereby he putteth him, in great hope and comfort. Afterward he beginneth to purge cleanse and strengthen, and such like things which make to recovering of health; so God also, when he hath remitted sins, and received man into the bosom of grace, doth lay on him all kind of affliction, and doth scour him, and renew him from day to day, in the knowledge and love of God, until he become safe, pure and renewed, which then at the last cometh to pass, when this mortal body dieth. Fourthly in these two paritions of the kingdom of God, two sorts of men are found, which abuse the same kingdom of the grace of God, and the gospel. Some become sluggish and slothful, saying, well if sins be pardoned freely of meer grace: and be washed away in baptism, there is no need that I should add any thing of mine own. Others think on the contrary, that they shall put away their sins by works, and so trusting to

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their own merits, they are proud and arrogant, and in respect of themselves contemn others, which do not so. The first of these contemn God's grace; the others, appugn it as not sufficient, and so they represent swine and dogs. Now all this appeareth by the gospel, by with Christ reigneth in the kingdom of God; for some abuse it unto carnal liberty; others on the contrary are persuaded, that it is not sufficient to salvation, but that their works also do help somewhat, and by this they deny and contemn the grace of God; hereof thou mayest read more in the epistle to the Romans, wherein these two sorts of men are plainly set forth. Fifthly, this kingdom of God, or remission of sins hath no bound or measure, as that place of the gospel doth very well shew, where Peter asketh the Lord, Mat. xviii. 21, 22. 'Lord, how 'oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till 'seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, 'Until seven times: but, until seventy times seven;' that is as often as shall be needful. After this followeth a parable, which the Lord there putteth forth, wherein he most severely admonisheth us, if we will not fall out of the favour of God, that we forgive our neighbour his offences without all delay or grudging, forasmuch as God always forgiveth us innumerable sins. Our debt, whereby we are bound unto God, is ten thousand talents, that is so unmeasurable and great, that we are not able to pay it with all our substance, all our strength and works; for we can put away no one sin, although it be even very little. Seeing therefore that God doth remit so many sins of his grace in his kingdom, it is meet that we should forgive our neighbour a few offences. Of this kingdom of God, wherein sins are forgiven, the scripture every where maketh mention, and saith, that the kingdom and dominion of Christ doth extend from one end of the land to the other; so saith David, Psal. lxxii. 8. 'He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and 'from the river unto the ends of the earth.' And a little after he saith, 'All nations shall serve him.' This also the Angel Gabriel declared to the Virgin Mary, Luke i. 32. 'The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father 'David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for

'ever,

'ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' These and such like places do shew that forgiveness of sins, wherein the kingdom of God doth especially consist, hath no measure or bound. Sixthly, hereof we may see how unchristianly they do, which bring forgiveness of sins to a certain measure, as they do, which measure out their indulgences for prescribed years, with forgiveness of the third, fourth, or half part; for hereby they bring the kingdom of God into a narrow and strait room, and are injurious to his mercy, forasmuch as there is no end of his kingdom, or measure of his mercy. But whosoever shall in faith call upon the name of God, shall be saved, as often as he doth it. Moreover, when the sinner shall be sorry for his sins, the Lord will no more remember them, as it is in the prophecy of Ezekial, chap. xviii. Seventhly, as this kingdom of God hath no measure or limits of forgiveness of sins, so also it hath no end, but endureth continually without ceasing; altho' the subjects of this kingdom do not abide in it continually, firmly and faithfully, but do oftentimes forsake it. So the favour and grace of God were continually with Peter, although he denied the Lord, and revolted from him. To the same effect tendeth the parable in the gospel, whereof we have now spoken; for the servant, which would not have pity of his fellow-servant, did make himself unworthy of the mercy of God, did deprive himself of the kingdom of God, which consisteth in pardoning of offences, as it is above-mentioned. Here university divines of a pregnant wit, as they seem unto themselves, and puffed up with knowledge, have disputed, whether and how forgiveness of sins doth come again when man reneweth his sin, not knowing what they say. But follow thou the plain and simple words of the gospel, viz. that thy sins are so often forgiven thee, as thou dost forgive thy brother, whom thou must so often forgive as he shall offend against thee. Wherefore in this parable, whereof I have even now made mention. Christ doth admonish us all, that we pardon and forgive all them that have offended us; as if he would say, As in man's affairs, he which is beneficial

ficial to another, hath others also beneficial unto him again so saith Christ, in the kingdom of heaven, which consisteth specially in forgiveness of sins, that is, in Christianity or among Christians, he which pardoneth another his offences, I also will pardon him his: and on the contrary, he that is not merciful toward another, to him I also will deny grace. I am over you as a Lord and King, and ye are fellow-servants and companions one with another; seeing therefore that I your Lord do readily forgive you, you also ought more readily to forgive one another. After the same sort also he hath commanded us to pray in the Lord's prayer, Mat. vi. 12. Forgive us our debts: which he would not have done, if he did not promise, and would not mercifully forgive us. But nevertheless, he addeth a condition or sign to this promise, when he saith, 'If ye forgive men their tres-'passes, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.' The first is a sign, the other a promise: Mark that it is here enjoined us, to forgive one another his sins and offences; so that we must be merciful and bountiful toward our neighbours, if we will have the heavenly Father gentle and appeased toward us. And let us be most certainly persuaded hereof, when we shall interpret at the best, and excuse as much as equity doth suffer, the offences and trespasses of others, although they be even great and grievous, that we also shall have a bountiful and merciful Father towards us in heaven. Wherefore it is a thing to be abhor'd in Christianity, and even blasphemous, when it is said, I cannot, neither will I forgive him that which he hath committed against me. I will be revenged, &c. Surely those blind men are ignorant that they do take from God his glory, to whom alone vengeance belongeth, and challenge it to themselves, and so they give up to the devil their own souls, which they have received of God, and ought to render them unto him again, whereunto they are perhaps provoked even with some small or trifling matter: Such kind of men as these ought to set before the eyes of their heart, these words of the gospel, Mat. xviii. 32. 'O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, 'because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had

compassion

compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Neither is it sufficient, if in gestures, signs, mouth or tongue, thou shew thyself a friend unto him, and forgive him, but thou must do it from thy heart, otherwise God will not forgive thee, yea, thou shalt be driven out of the kingdom of grace; wherefore if, at any time, we have tried the mercy of God towards us, we must also readily pardon our fellow-brethren, which have offended us; for in that respect the merciful Father forgiveth us our sins, that we also should forgive our brethren, and shew mercy towards them, even as he is merciful towards us, and remitteth sin, death, the fault and the punishment. When we shall do this, then are we received into the kingdom of God; for the goodness of God liveth in our hearts, and maketh us also good; Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father, yet nevertheless he reigneth in the hearts and consciences of the faithful, so that they love, fear, reverence, and diligently obey him, no otherwise than obedient subjects do their king, and in all their doings are made like to him, even as he himself saith, Mat. v. 48. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' Now God is perfect in this, that he taketh away and pardoneth our wickedness, defect, sin, and imperfection, that we also may do the like to our brethren; but when we will not do the like, we are driven out of this kingdom, and are made subject to the kingdom of sin, death, and the devil, as disloyal and disobedient inhabitants of some country, are thrust out: Which God of his mercy turn from us. *Amen.*

[All these things may be comprehended in the principal points following.] 1. Christ reigneth, when, by faith of the gospel, he worketh the goodness and grace of God in our hearts, and maketh them like unto God, 2. In such a kingdom the conscience enjoyeth peace, consolation and rest, when it understandeth and knoweth that God is merciful unto it, and imputeth not sins:

3. Therefore man beareth all kind of tribulation and affliction, by which sin is scoured, and the force thereof abated: He also endeavoureth to be beneficial unto others, as he himself hath been as it were overwhelmed with the benefits of God. 4. And so the Lord reigneth after two sorts: First, for that he maketh the faithful certain of the grace of God, and remission of sins. Secondly, for that he layeth the cross upon them, that the body of sin may be weakned, and they brought to amendment. 5. He that forgiveth his debtors pertaineth to the kingdom of God, but he that doth not forgive them, remaineth under the kingdom of sin. These things I thought good to speak in this present place concerning the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of Christ, which is the same; to wit, that it is nothing else but a kingdom, in which thou shalt find nothing but forgiveness of sins. Which kingdom is preached and offered unto us by the gospel; God grant that we may so receive it. *Amen.*

SERMON XII.

Of Prayer.

THAT prayer may be good indeed, and may also be heard, we must first consider that two things are necessary thereunto; one, that we first meditate upon the promise of God, and do as it were advertise God thereof, and trusting unto it, be imboldned and made cheerful to pray; for unless God hath commanded us to pray, and had promised also that he will hear us, even all creatures could not obtain so much as a grainby their petitions. Whereupon it followeth, that no man doth obtain any thing of God for his own worthiness, or the worthiness of his prayer, but by the only goodness of God, who preventing all our petitions and desires provoketh us to pray and desire of him, by his gentle and bounteous promise and commandment, that we may learn

learn how great care he hath over us, and is ready to give us more things than we durſt enterprize to ask, and that we may alſo learn to pray boldly, inaſmuch as he giveth us all things, even in more ample manner than we do aſk them. It is neceſſary that we do no whit doubt of the promiſe of the true and faithful God, for therefore he hath promiſed that he will hear us, yea, and hath commanded us to pray, that we might have a ſure and ſtrong faith that our prayer ſhould be ſo heard, as he ſaith, Mat. xxi. and Mark xi. 'Whatſoever ye ſhall 'aſk in prayer, believing, ye ſhall receive.' And in Luke, chap. xi. 9. "And I ſay unto you, Ask and it ſhall be given you: ſeek, and ye ſhall find: knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that ſeeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it ſhall be opened. If a ſon ſhall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a ſtone? Or if he ask a fiſh, will he for a fiſh give him a ſerpent? Or if he ſhall ask an egg, will he offer him a ſcorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?" We muſt boldly truſt to theſe and ſuch like promiſes and commandments, and pray with true confidence. If one ſo prayeth, that he doubt whether God hear him, and maketh his prayer only at a venture, caring not greatly whether he be heard or not heard, he committeth a double offence: One, for that he himſelf maketh his prayer fruſtrate, and laboureth in vain; for ſo James ſaith, chap. i. 6, 7. 'But let him 'ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth 'is like a wave of the ſea, driven with the wind and 'toſſed. For let not that man think that he ſhall re-'ceive any thing of the Lord.' Such a man's heart is not quiet and ſettled, wherefore God can give him nothing; but faith maketh the heart quiet, and capable of the gifts of God. The other offence is, that he counteth the moſt faithful and true God, as a lying, vain and inconſtant man, as he which neither is able, neither will fulfil his promiſes, ſo by his doubtings he robbeth God of his honour, and name of faithfulneſs, and truth. Whereby it is ſo grievouſly offended, that even that of-

fence being committed, a Christian is plainly changed into a heathen, and denieth and loseth his true God, so that if he continue therein, he is damned for ever without all comfort; and if any thing be given unto him, which he asketh, it is given him not to good but to evil, as well temporal as eternal, not for his prayer sake, but from the wrath of God, that he may recompense those goodly words, which are uttered in sins, unbelief, and to the dishonour of God. Some say, I would trust indeed that my prayers should be heard, if I were worthy, or if I could pray well. Then, say I, if thou wilt not pray, before thou shalt know and find thyself fit to pray, thou shalt never pray. For as it is before said, our prayer must not rest upon our worthiness, or the worthiness of itself, or be grounded thereon, but upon the immutable truth of the promise of God. If so be that it trust to itself or any other thing, and ground itself thereon, it is false and deceiveth thee, altho' thy heart should even burst by reason of the ardent affection of godliness, and thou shouldest weep nothing but drops of blood. For therefore we pray, because we are unworthy to pray, and hereby surely we are made worthy to pray, and fit to be heard, inasmuch as we think that we are worthy, and do boldly and chearfully trust to the faithfulness and truth of God. Although thou be unworthy, yet have regard hereunto, and mark most diligently, that a thousand times more consisteth in this, that thou honour the truth of God, and not with thy doubtfulness accuse his faithful promise of falshood. For thine own worthiness doth not further thee, neither thy unworthiness hinder thee; but infidelity doth contemn thee, trust and confidence maketh thee worthy and preserveth thee; wherefore so behave thyself all thy life long, that thou do not at any time esteem thyself either worthy or fit to pray or receive, unless thou find thyself to be such a one, as dareth enterprise the matter freely, trusting to the true and certain promise of thy merciful God, which will so shew both his mercy and goodness unto thee, that as he promised to hear thee being unworthy, and having not deserved it, of his meer grace, moved with no

prayers;

prayers: so he will hear thee being an unworthy asker, of his only grace, to the honour of his truth and promise, that so thou mayest give thanks, not to thine own worthiness, but to his truth, whereby he hath fulfilled his promise, and to his mercy, whereby he hath made and set forth his promise. And this the 25th Psalm confirmeth, where David saith, "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies." Grace and mercy are in his promise, faithfulness or truth in fulfilling and hearing. And in the 85th Psalm, he saith, 'Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness 'and peace have kissed each other,' that is, they come together in every work and gift, which we obtain of the Lord by praying. In this trust and confidence thou must so behave thyself, that thou do not limit to the Lord any bound or end, day or place, neither appoint any manner or measure of hearing, but that thou do commit all those things to his divine will, wisdom and omnipotence, that thou boldly and cheerfully look to be heard, and yet not desire to know, how, and where, how soon, and how long, and by what means. For his divine wisdom shall find a better manner and measure, time and place, than we can think, even although that should be done by miracles. Even as in the Old Testament, Exod. xiv. when the children of Israel trusted that God would deliver them, and yet no possible means were before their eyes, or in all their thoughts, then the red sea opened itself, and gave them passage, drowning all their enemies at once. The holy woman Judith, when she heard that the citizens of Bethulia would after the space of five days give up the city, if God in the mean time did not help them, rebuked them, saying, "What are ye, that ye tempt the Lord? those are not devices and purposes, whereby we obtain mercy of God, but rather whereby we provoke him unto wrath and displeasure. Will ye set the mercy of the Lord a time, and appoint him a day after your will!" Hereupon God did help her after a marvellous sort, that at the last she slew Holofernes, and

put the enemies to flight, Judith xiii. So Saint Paul also saith, Eph. iii. that the power of God is such and so great, that it doth far greater and better things than we either ask or think. Wherefore we ought to think ourselves more vile, than that we may name, appoint, or prescribe the time, place, manner, measure, and other circumstances of that which we ask of God, but we must leave all things wholly unto him, constantly and boldly, believing that he will hear us.

SERMON XIII.

On the bidding of Guests to the Great Supper.

Luke xiv. 16. to the 24. *A certain man made a great supper, and bade many, &c.*

AS in the whole scripture, so in this text also we must endeavour, that according to our ability (as ye have oftentimes heard heretofore) we may understand the true and simple meaning, and thereupon settle our heart and conscience. For he that shall encounter with Satan, must not waver and stagger this way and that way, but must be certain of his cause, and instructed with many places of scripture, otherwise when the devil shall by an uncertain place of scripture, draw him to his fork, he will toss him this way, and that way, as the wind doth a dry leaf. Wherefore out of this text we must gather a certain meaning, whereby we may persist and stand sure. Howbeit it is not to be understood of the reverend eucharist, or the bread of the Lord's table, although Papists have miserably wrested it, as they have done many other authorities of scripture. But this is the scope, this is the sum of this text; that the gospel is preached and published through the whole world, but few receive and embrace it; and it is therefore called a supper, for that the gospel must be the last word, which shall continue to the end of the world. Where-

fore the supper here is nothing else, but a very rich and sumptuous feast, which God hath made through Christ by the gospel, which setteth before us great good things and rich treasures. And he sent his servants to bid men to this sumptuous supper; that is, the apostles were altogether sent with one word into the whole world, that they might bid and call men to this supper, with one voice, with one gospel, with one embassage; after such sort, that if St. Peter had come and preached the gospel of God in that place where Paul had preached it before, yet had it been one word, and the same preaching, that the hearers should have been compelled to say, Behold he preacheth the same that we heard before of the other, they wholly consent and agree, and the thing that they publish is all one. That the Evangelist might insinuate this consent and agreement in preaching, he saith, 'He sent his servant,' he saith not, his servants, as of many. Now this message the servant must do to the bidden guests. 'Come for all things are now ready.' For Christ hath suffered death, and in his death hath slain sin and death, also was risen again from death, the holy Ghost was given: and briefly all things were prepared which pertained unto that great supper. All things were without all our cost. For the father by Christ hath paid the price of all things, that without all our merit and labour we might enjoy his goodness, and be nourished and enriched. He sendeth his servant therefore first to the Jews, to bid them to this great supper, unto whom the promise was made of God; for the law and all the prophets were directed hereunto, that they might prepare the people of God. As the angel Gabriel declared of John the Baptist to his father Zacharias, Luke i. 15, 16, 17. "He shall be filled with the holy Ghost, even from his mothers womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers of the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." But what did the guest answer to the message of the servant? The text following declareth, 'And they

all with one consent began to make excuse." This is that whereof the Lord speaketh, Matth. x. 37, 38. " He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: And he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." For he that will be partaker of this supper, must put all things into danger for the Gospel sake, body, goods, wife, children, friends, &c. Moreover he must leave all things whatsoever they be, that separate him from the Gospel, altho' they seem good, just, right, and holy; neither think ye that these men which here excuse themselves, were guilty of grievous sins, or occupied about unjust matters and works; for it is not unjust to buy, to use trade of merchandize, to maintain himself honestly, to marry a wife, to be joined in matrimony. But therefore can they not come to this supper, for that they will not forsake these things, but will rather cleave to them in their heart; now they must be utterly forsaken and left, when the Gospel so requireth; thou wilt perhaps say, I would indeed willingly follow the Gospel, I would cleave unto it, and do all other things whatsoever, but to forsake goods, houses, family, wife, children, &c. surely this is a hard matter; God hath commanded me to labour, to maintain my wife and children, &c. Behold therefore this is the scope and sum, that the Gospel is the word of faith and offence, because of which every faithful man doth bear offence willingly; indeed God hath willed thee to do these things, however he hath also commanded, that thou prefer him before all creatures, and love him above all things, and think him higher than all things which thou canst know, even as the chief and greatest commandment giveth us to understand; 'Thou shalt love the 'Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, 'and with all thy might,' Deut. vi. 5. Wherefore thou must forsake all things before thou suffer thy self to be pluckt away from the love of him, or his words; although indeed he loseth nothing, which forsaketh any thing for the Gospel's sake; if for the gospels sake thou lose this temporal life, God will give thee another far

better

better viz. eternal life, as Christ saith, Matth. x. 39. 'He that findeth his life shall lose it: And he that 'loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.' If thou be compelled to forsake thy wife together with thy children, remember that God hath a care of them, he will be a better father unto them than thyself, which undoubtedly cometh to pass, if so be that thou believe; for we have very great and rich promises that he will not suffer his word to fail, but will always fulfil it; if we can freely and confidently trust in him, and commit our selves wholly to him; Christ saith after this sort, Matth. xix. 29." And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my names sake, shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life." We have here his words and promise, what would we have more? Or what can we desire more? Wherein therefore do we fail only in our faith; Whereof no man cometh to this supper, but he that bringeth with him a sincere faith, which God preferreth and loveth above all creatures; but how doth the Lord recompence them which excused themselves that they could not come to the supper? The text itself declareth, 'Then the master of the housebeing 'angry said to his servant: Go out quickly into the 'streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, 'and the maimed and the halt, and the blind.' To go into the streets and lanes is nothing else, but that where as the Jews made themselves unworthy of the Gospel, and did refuse it, the disciples turned to the Gentiles: for it was enjoined them of Christ, that they should not turn themselves to the Gentiles, nor preach the Kingdom of God in the cities of the Samaritans, but should go only to the sheep of the house of Israel, and should feed them only, as they did; now the Jews striving against this sword, and by no means receiving it, the Disciples said, Acts xiii. 46, 47." It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation

unto

unto the ends of the earth." But what meaneth that which he saith moreover to the servant?

'Go out into the high-ways and hedges and compel them 'to come in, that my house may be filled.' This is to be understood of desperate and weak consciences, which also pertain unto this supper, and are compelled unto it, but this compulsion is not outward, but inward and spiritual, and is done after this sort: when the the lawis preached, sin is set before our eyes and revealed, that a man may come to the knowledge of himself, so that to compel, enter or come in, doth rightly signify to drive sin into the conscience, whereby a man may know that he is nothing, that all his works are sins, and subject to damnation, and so suddenly his conscience may become desperate, and his heart faint and terrified, that all that confidence and opinion of help may depart, and man himself be able no where to comfort himself in any thing, and at the last be driven to despair of himself; if so be that one be once after this sort compelled, then do not long delay to let him come in, but deliver the man out of desperation; that cometh to pass, when thou comfortest him by the Gospel, and declarest that he is delivered from his sins, saying, believe, in Christ that he hath made thee free from thy sins, then shalt thou be delivered and free from sin. And this is the meaning of that which he saith, 'Compel them to come in.' It is not to be understood of outward compulsion, as some interpret it, that wicked and ungodly ones should be violently driven to the supper, for this prevaileth nothing, neither is it so meant in this place wherefore it is to be referred only to the conscience, and is inward and spiritual. Now he goeth on to speak to the servant and the rest. 'For I say unto you, that none of those men which 'were bidden, shall taste of my supper.' This is the conclusion, that they which think themselves most certain that they shall come to the supper, and taste of it, shall not taste of it: the reason ye have heard. Now briefly the guests that are bidden and do not come, are they, which think that they shall obtain the supper by their own works, very much wearying themselves, thinking assuredly that they shall taste of it; but the Lord concludeth and

saith

faith, Not one of these men shall taste of my supper. Wherefore most gentle Lord? they have committed no wicked thing, neither have been occupied about unjust matters; behold this is the reason, for that they have forsaken faith, and have not confessed it freely before every one, neither have preferred that rich and sumptuous supper before all creatures; for seeing it is sumptuous, it requireth those men that do judge it to be so, and do put any thing in danger, whatsoever it be, that they may be partakers of it; thus ye have the compendious meaning of this text, which I have only briefly run over, if any will expound it more at large, I am well content he so do.

SERMON XIV.

On the Works of Charity.

Luke vi. 36. to the 42. *Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful,* &c.

THE works of charity which we must do to our neighbours in temporal things, and in corporal necessity, are described unto us in this text; which the Lord then declared, when he said a little before in the same chapter, "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you: bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other: and him that taketh away thy cloke, forbid not to take thy coat also, &c." All which he comprehending in a brief sum, saith, 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.' Here ye see all good works summarily described, which we must exercise among ourselves, as our heavenly Father hath exercised them toward us. Ye have oftentimes heard, that it is not needful to do good works toward God, but toward our neighbours only: God can be made neither stronger nor richer by our works, but man may be strengthened

and enriched by them, unto whom also they are necessary, unto whom only they are to be directed, and not unto God, which ye have very often heard, and which is now in your ears; but would to God, it would at the last burst forth both into your hands and works. Mark therefore how perverse an order it is, when any deal with God by works, with whom notwithstanding they must deal only by faith, and when faith is directed unto man, whereas it is to be placed in God alone. Turn these contrariwise, and they shall be right, after this sort; let us first repose faith in God alone, and let us then give ourselves to serve our neighbours, and to direct all our works so that they may turn to their advantage. We must deal before God by no other thing but by faith alone, because none is able to help us but God only, and whatsoever we possess either in mind or body, that cometh wholly to us from God alone, in whom we ought to trust, upon whom we ought to set our heart. Now some use such a preposterous order, that they repose faith, which ought to have respect to God only, in themselves and others; they rest upon their traditions, and whatsoever their great masters have invented, in that they put their trust. Of such God saith in Jeremiah, chap. ii. 13, 35. "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me: behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned." First he saith, that his spouse is turned into an harlot, and hath estranged herself from God the fountain of life, from whom life, salvation and every good thing floweth, him they have forsaken. Secondly, they set up their own traditions, and dig unto themselves a fountain of their own, which can hold no water. So Papists trust to their own inventions, to their founding of masses, to their fastings, prayers, and such like things, which appear to be as a fountain, out of which they would draw life, and blessedness of salvation, when notwithstanding it is able to hold no water; they forsake the fountain of life. Afterward he saith, they dare

dare rise against me, that I should not be angry with them, alledging that their works are just, and they will go to law with me. Behold this is another sin, that they go about to defend their works. Whereupon God also saith, 'I will plead with thee. Why gaddest thou about 'so much to change thy way?' So faith pertaineth to God alone, whereunto it belongeth to obtain all whatsoever things are necessary, as well temporal things as eternal, and so to obtain them, that it think not that it hath merited in any thing. Also, it must again apply itself downward toward our neighbour, without looking for any recompense, not that blessedness consisteth in that deriving of faith, to wit, charity, for neither doth God require that, who will have the conscience to rest only in him; even as the spouse must cleave only to her husband, and to no other, so also God requireth of us that we trust in him alone. These things Christ declareth, when he saith, 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.' Wherefore I must so order my conscience toward God, that I undoubtedly believe, that I have him a bountiful and merciful Father, as I will afterward declare, and that I also do shew mercy toward my neighbour; which faith must be inward, and carried upward unto God, but works must be without, and deriv[illegible] downward to our neighbours. After this sort Abraham did, when at the mountain in the country of Moria, he ascended to God, he left his servants and asses below at the bottom of the mountain, taking only Isaac with him. The same must be done of us if we will ascend unto God that we may come to him with Isaac only, that is, with faith; servants and asses, that is, works, are to be left below. Thus much for the entrance of this text concerning faith and works, to wit, that faith must pierce inward and upward, but works must go without and downward, whereby at the length it cometh to pass, that we are righteous before God and men for that we give due honour unto God, and believe according to his word, and satisfy our neighbour in the duty of love. Now let us see the very words of the text in order. 'Be ye therefore 'merciful, as your Father also is merciful.' How therefore is our heavenly Father merciful? After that sort,

that

giveth us all good things, corporal and ſpiritual, tranſitory and eternal, freely, and of his mercy; for if he ſhould give unto us according to our deſert, he ſhould give unto us nothing but hell-fire and eternal damnation. Whatſoever therefore good things he beſtoweth upon us, he beſtoweth them of his meer mercy: He ſeeth us ſtick faſt in death, therefore he hath mercy upon us and giveth us life: he ſeeth us to be the children of hell, therefore he taking pity upon us, giveth us heaven: He ſeeth us to be miſerable and naked, hungry and thirſty, in pitying him hereof, he clotheth us, and refreſheth us with meat and drink, and maketh us full of all good things: So whatſoever we have either in body or in ſpirit, he giveth it us of his meer mercy, without any merit or deſert of ours. Whereupon Chriſt here ſaith, Imitate your Father and be merciful like unto him. This is not ſimple mercy, ſuch as reaſon teacheth, for that is greedy of her own advantage, which giveth only to great and learned men, and to them that deſerve it; it loveth them that be fair and beautiful; it giveth unto them, of whom it looketh for profit again, which is a mercy divided, begging, and as it were torn and broken in pieces: For if I ſhall give to him that hath deſerved, or if I ſhall regard fairneſs or friendſhip, it is a bargain or debt, and not mercy. Hereof Chriſt ſpeaketh in the ſame chapter before this text, in this wiſe, "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for ſinners alſo love thoſe that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for ſinners alſo do even the ſame. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for ſinners alſo lend to ſinners to receive as much again." But the mercy of Chriſtians muſt not ſeek her own, but ſo behave itſelf, that it be indifferent, that it regard all alike with open eyes, both friends and foes, even as our heavenly Father doth: And whereſoever this mercy is not, neither is there faith alſo; for thy heart being ſettled in faith, ſo that thou knoweſt God to have ſhewed himſelf thy God, ſo gentle and bountiful, without thy deſert, and of meer grace when thou waſt as yet his enemy, and the child of everlaſting malediction;

thy

thy heart, I say, being settled in this faith, thou canst not contain thyself, but that thou shew thyself again so to thy neighbour, and that wholly for the love of God, and for thy neighbour's good. Take heed therefore what difference thou make between a friend and enemy, between the worthy and unworthy; for ye see all, which are in this text rehearsed, to have otherwise deserved of us than that we should love them, or do well unto them. And the same thing the Lord meaneth, when he saith, Luke vi. 35. "Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil." But how cometh it to pass, that a certain contrary thing to that which we have taught, seemeth to appear in this text, where he saith, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Again, Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." All which authorities sound it, that we must deal before God with our works, and by them deserve the mercy of God, when notwithstanding ye have very often heard, that faith alone doth all; and both Paul, and the whole scripture, do commonly say and affirm, that we must believe in God alone, and deal only by meer faith before him. It is requisite here to understand that good words are only a setting forth and condemnation of faith, so that if I believe, I must be merciful, I must not judge nor condemn my neighbour, I must forgive, and give unto my neighbour. Wherefore set an example before yourselves, Gen. xxii. 12. What did Abraham, being commanded to offer his son? He obeyed the commandment, and drew forth the sword to kill his son: What ensued, thereupon? The Angel of the Lord stayed him, saying, 'Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing 'unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing 'thou hast not with-held thy son, thine only son from me.' Howbeit this is here to be known and marked of us, that we must first receive, before we give; before we shew mercy, we must receive mercy of God; we do not lay the first stone, neither doth the sheep seek the shepherd, but

but the shepherd the sheep. Wherefore so bestow thy works in every respect, that thou look for nothing at God's hand because of them; for we obtain even every thing of God without merit or desert, so God saith, Isaiah lxv. 1. 'I am sought of them that asked not 'for me: I am found of them that sought me not.' And in the end of the same chapter, 'And it shall come to 'pass (saith God) that before they call, I will answer; 'and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.' For indeed before we seek him, he findeth us, before we ask him, he heareth us. Likewise St. Paul saith, Rom. iii. 22. "There is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, thro' faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus:" And in the chapter following, he saith, "Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace," as he saith afterward in the eleventh chapter. Again, I must bestow my works so that they may be a certain sign, and as it were a seal graven with letters, whereby I may be assured that my faith is sincere; for if I feel in my heart, that my works proceedeth from love, I am sure concerning the integrity and soundness of my faith. If I forgive, the same forgiveness doth assure me concerning the sincerity of my faith, doth declare my faith, and certify me, that God hath also pardoned my sin, and doth daily more and more pardon me. So it fell out with Abraham, his work made his faith known unto him. God indeed knew that he did believe (but it behoved that Abraham also should know, and shew forth his faith; wherefore works following only freely as fruits of faith, are declarations of such a faith) for what should it profit me, if I had even a strong faith, but unknown unto me? even

even as if I should have a chest full of gold, yet I being ignorant thereof, should have no advantage thereby: but if any would shew it unto me, he would do me as great a pleasure as if he gave it me. So if I have faith, and yet be ignorant thereof, it is no profit unto me; wherefore it must burst forth, and be shewed by the works that ensue, which are both signs and seals of the present faith. So St. Peter meaneth, when speaking of the works of charity, and the virtues of faith, he concludeth thus: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; For so an entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. i. 10, 11. He saith not, do good works, that by them ye may be called, but that ye may assure yourselves of your calling. Accustom yourselves well unto the phrases and manner of speaking used in the scripture, that ye rush not upon them like blind moles, and confirm works in such places as this; for works are to be rejected, if we think that we are justified by them; but herein they are extolled and commended, in that they are profitable to our neighbour, and fruits and signs of faith. Behold, it was meet that I should make this digression, least I should confirm the meaning of the Papists. Now if it should be demanded why God oftentimes setteth down such contrary sentences, and disagreeing one with another, as it seemeth to us and our reason; I answer, that he may exercise us in reading, and that we should not think that we understand the while scripture, when we scarce understand one place. Some sayings do guide the spirit, how we ought to behave ourselves toward God, only by faith, as this: 'Being justified freely,' Rom. iii. 24. Again, lest the body should be sluggish outwardly, there are sentences also set forth unto us, which do guide and exercise the body, as these which we have heard here rehearsed, 'Forgive and ye shall be forgiven.' Christ affirmeth that he will require works in the last day, and will say after this sort to the condemned, Mat. xxv. 42, 43. 'For 'I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye

took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; ſick, and in priſon, and ye viſited me not." Which ſentences, while ignorant and light ſpirits labour to wreſt and apply to works, they ſee not how great evil they commit. But ſpiritual men refer them to the very body only, they themſelves ſtanding naked before God in ſpirit, which is both juſt and neceſſary. For there are two things in man, the ſpirit and the fleſh. Hereupon there are ſome places which do guide only faith in the ſpirit: ſome which do direct only works in the body; for one place cannot direct both the body and the ſpirit together. We muſt ſo do with our ſubſtance, that we be willing to part from it, to lend, and to give to our neighbour, when it ſhall be requiſite. And if we ſee any not to have, wherewith to make reſtitution, we muſt releaſe him, and forgive the debt according to the example of Nehemiah, as we read in Eſdras i. 5. For God hath given many things unto us, who is able to give us more things alſo if we believe. And thus we hear that if we will be Chriſtians, we ought to lend, give, and to be willing to part from that which we have, otherwiſe we ſhall not ſhew the fruits of a lively faith. Wherefore lay up this text inwardly in your minds, that ye deal by no other thing before God, but by faith only, and refer and beſtow your works to the ſervice and profit of your neighbour. Thus much ſhall ſuffice to have been ſpoken concerning the former part. Now what is to be ſaid more of this text, or what doth follow, we will afterward conſider. In the words following the Lord interpreteth himſelf, what kind of mercy he underſtandeth, ſaying after this ſort 'Judge not, and ye ſhall not 'be judged; condemn not, and ye ſhall not be condemned; 'forgive, and ye ſhall be forgiven; give and it ſhall be 'given you.' In this place the Lord divideth mercy into three parts, that we may not be ignorant, what manner of mercy that ought to be, which it behoveth us to ſhew to our neighbours. Firſt judgment and condemnation is taken from us. Then thou muſt forgive thy neighbour if he hath committed any thing againſt thee. Laſtly thou muſt help the needy. Theſe things this word

word (*mercy*) signifieth, whereſoever it cometh in the ſcriptures. And all theſe muſt proceed from a ſincere heart, all colouring and flattery being taken away, that there be no reſpect had of the perſon. For if thou deſireſt to wiſh well to them, which wiſh well to thee; or to hurt them, which hurt thee, thou art utterly deceived. But thou muſt do ſo, as Chriſt ſaith a little before; imitate thy heavenly father, love thine enemy; do well to him, which do evil to thee; forgive him that hurteth thee; lend to the needy, and ſo of the reſt. That therefore we may ſpeak of the former part, that we muſt not judge or condemn; we muſt mark, that God hath ordained the ſword of the magiſtrate, to the puniſhing of public offences, ſo that it be provided, that it be not done againſt the precept and commandment of God, as that the innocent be not executed; for whereas the judge dealeth unjuſtly, he is as well an homicide as another, of which judgment Chriſt ſaith nothing here. Elſewhere he maketh mention thereof, when as he ſaid to him, which deſired that he would bid his brother divide the inheritance with him, Luke xii. 24. 'Who made 'me a judge or a divider over you?' For the care and governing of outward things do not belong to the kingdom of Chriſt. But Chriſt ſpeaketh here of another judgment, namely of that whereby one reputeth and counteth another good or evil, when as notwithſtanding he ſeeth no good or evil to be done of him. Which judgment belongeth only unto God. For it may be, that thou ſee thy brother offend to day, notwithſtanding tomorrow God doth receive, then may he both be, and alſo ſeem unto thee to be good, neither muſt thou remember his ſins; for that Chriſt hath forbidden; there cannot be either love or concord where this judgment and condemnation is uſual amongſt men. To judge and condemn another is nothing elſe, than to a have a beam in his own eye, which all hypocrites do without doubt bear in their eyes. For they that judge themſelves good, are offended at their brother, whatſoever others do, it diſpleaſeth them, foraſmuch as they will not acknowledge their own ſin. But it cometh to paſs, that when thou ſeeſt many ſins in others, thou ſeeſt not the beam

that is in thine own eye, and so falleſt into the judgment of God. Hereof it cometh, that thou which judgeſt another, art made worſe than the moſt wicked bawd, or the moſt unchaſt harlot beforeGod,who alone knoweth who is to be ſaved,and who to be condemned. Such hypocrites are of that nature, that it is a pleaſure unto them, and they take no ſmall delight thereof, if they reaſon and talk either of the adultery or fault of another man, yea, they increaſe a ſmall thing or trifle in their neighbour, and whatſoever others do, they interpret it at the worſt, ſo that no man is able to do that, which pleaſeth or liketh them; and though they themſelves do not ſuch things, yet they willingly hear that other men do them, whereas a godly man helpeth as much as he is able, that theſe things may be covered and amended; but it many times falleth out, that they are moſt filthy adulterers,even according to the fleſh,which do ſo judge and condemn others, howbeit they do not judge man only, but even God himſelf; Wherefore if thy brother be a ſinner, conceal his ſin, and pray for him to the Lord, if thou reveal his ſin and rejoice thereat, ſurely thou art not the child of the merciful father, for if thou were, thouwouldſt be merciful according as he is. This is a thing moſt certain, that we are not able to ſhew ſo great mercy to our neighbour, as God both hath and doth ſhew to us; but that is the practice of Satan, that we do thoſe things which are quite contrary unto mercy, which is an undoubted ſign that there is no mercy at all in us. Of theſe judgers of others, Chriſt ſpeaketh in the Goſpel, when he ſaith, Luke vi. 39, 40, 41, 42. "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch? The diſciple is not above his maſter; but every one that is perfectſhall be as hismaſter. Andwhybeholdeſt thou themote that is in thybrothers eye,but perceiveſtnot the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canſt thou ſay to thy brother,Brother,let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye,when thou thy ſelf beholdeſt not the beam that is in thine owneye? Thou hypocrite,caſt out firſt the beam out of thine own eye,and then ſhalt thou ſeeclearly to pull out the mote that is inthy brothers eye."Asif he ſaid, thou thinkeſt that thy brother is blind, and in thy mind

mind doeſt find fault with another, that is, thou wilt guide another, notwithſtanding thou thyſelf art blind; thou judgeſt him a ſinner, and thyſelf an honeſt and juſt man; what other thing is this, than for thy heart to be ſo affected, that thou count thyſelf better? Which is nothing elſe, than that thou wilt lead and guide others, when thou thy ſelf art blinder than a mole, ſo that he which followeth thee, doth fall with thee into the ditch. Of ſuch as judge themſelves to excel others, and think themſelves to be followed more than the word of God, St. Paul ſpeaketh, Rom. ii. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. "Behold (ſaith he) thou art called a Jew, and reſteth in the law, and makeſt thy boaſt of God; And knoweſt his will, and approveſt the things that are moſt excellent, being inſtructed out of the law, And are confident that thou thy ſelf art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkneſs, An inſtructer of the fooliſh, a teacher of babes, which haſt the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf; thou that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal? Thou that ſayeſta man ſhould not commit adultery, doſt thou commit adultery? thou that abhorreſt idols, doſt thou commit ſacrilege? Thou that makeſt thy boaſt of the law, thro' breaking the law diſhonoureſt thou God?" Whereupon he alſo ſaith in the beginning of the ſame chapter to hypocrites: "Therefore thou art inexcuſable, O man, whoſoever thou art that judgeſt; for wherein thou judgeſt another, thou condemneſt thyſelf; for thou that judgeſt, doſt the ſame things. But we are ſure that the judgment of God is according to truth, againſt them which commit ſuch things. And thinkeſt thou this, O man, that judgeſt them which doſuch things, and doſt the ſame, that thou ſhalt eſcape the judgment of God?" Lo, this is to ſpeak the truth to hypocrites, who go about to ſhew the way to others, which they themſelves know not, leading other men into the ditch with them. Therefore the Lord ſaith, 'The diſciple is not above his maſter, but whoſoever will be a perfect diſciple ſhall be as his maſter.' This is a common proverb: I can learn no more of my maſter than he knoweth himſelf; wherefore doth the

Lord ſpeak this proverb? becauſe of two ſorts of maſters; the one is blind, whom if I ſhall follow, I alſo my ſelf ſhall become blind: he himſelf falleth into the ditch, and I follow. The other maſter is the merciful father, of whom we muſt learn mercy, whom if we follow, we alſo do become merciful like as he is; if we were merciful daily, we ſhould alſo become perfect, as he is perfect, but that cometh not to paſs, as long as we are in this life. The ſecond part of mercy is, that we forgive them which have endamaged us, or hurt us by any means. A Chriſtian can never be ſo hurt, but he ought to forgive, not only ſeven times, but ſeventy times ſeven times as the Lord ſaith unto Peter,, Mat. xviii 35. Wherefore God forgiveth a Chriſtian his ſin or infirmity, that he may alſo forgive others their infirmity, which Chriſt ſetteth forth in a moſt goodly parable, which he concludeth in theſe words; 'So likewiſe ſhall 'my heavenly Father do alſo unto you, if ye from your 'hearts forgive not every one his brother their treſpaſſes.' And ſo we pray daily in the Lord's prayer, with an addition, ſaying, 'Forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive 'them that treſpaſs againſt us.' Is this a hard matter, if I a wretched ſinner, do forgive my neighbour his treſpaſſes, and his infirmity, whereas the Lord will forgive me my ſins and my infirmity? If one had killed my father, what were this, compared to my ſin, wherewith I have offended God, and provoked him to anger?

The third part of mercy is, that we give to them that be in miſery and need, and that we help them, whereas John ſpeaketh thus, 1 John iii. 17. 'But whoſo hath 'this worlds good, and ſeeth his brother have need, and 'ſhuttethup hisbowels of compaſſionfromhim, howdwell-'eth the love of God in him?' For where the love of God is, it is moved to ſhew it ſelf even in outward works. Hereunto alſo pertaineth the ſaying of Chriſt, Mat. v. 'Bleſſed are the merciful for they ſhall obtain mercy.' Wherefore the Lord addeth, a promiſe in the Goſpel, ſaying, 'Give and itſhall be given unto you, a goodmea-'ſure, preſſed down, ſhaken together, and running over 'ſhall men give into your boſom.' And continuing on his ſpeech,

peech, he saith, 'For with what measure ye mete with, 'the same shall men mete to you again.' This much shall suffice concerning the parts of mercy which we ought to shew to our neighbours; unto which the special words of Christ ought to exhort us, who when in the Gospel of Matthew, he had spoken much of a Christian life, and of love to be shewed to our brethren, thus concludeth, saying, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to 'you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the 'Prophets,' Mat. vii 12. Now every one is so affected, that being cast down, and in distress, he would wish all the world to help him; if I be a miserable sinner, drowned in sins, bearing a burthened and troubled conscience, I would that the whole world should comfort me, should help and succour me, should cover my sin and shame, so I also ought to behave myself toward my neighbour, not to judge him, nor condemn him, but to forgive him his offences, to help him, to provide for him, to lend unto him, and give him, even as I would wish to be done unto myself, if I were driven into distress, necessity, exile or poverty; and herein truly Christians are known, if they love one another, if one do such works of mercy unto another, as Christ said unto his disciples at his last supper, 'I give unto you a new com-'mand that ye love one another, as I have loved you; 'by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye 'have love one to another;' Thus ye have the meaning of this text, it remaineth that we call upon God for his grace.

SERMON XV.

The Sum of a Christian Life.

1 Tim. i. 5, 6, 7. *Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart,* &c.

IT is well known unto you dearly beloved brethen, with how great severity God hath commanded his word to be heard and learned; for he most highly e-

seemeth it, and hath bestowed much labour in defending, and publishing it to the world; he hath suffered all the prophets to come into perils and dangers, at the last also he sent his own son because of his word, whom he suffered to die even the death of the cross; and what persecutions have not the apostles themselves bore for the word sake? what afflictions have not all the Christians suffered? unto some of which he hath committed the ministry of his word faithfully to be executed, and to others, hath enjoined the charge of hearing the same. If there were no other cause besides this, whereby we might be moved to hear and learn God's word, but for that it is the good pleasure, will, and commandment of God, yet this one ought to be sufficient great and weighty; for it is our duty as creatures to obey our Lord and Creator, and that with all readiness of mind, in as much as he hath given us so many good things, and doth as yet daily give us more, for which we shall never be able to give him sufficient worthy thanks. Howbeit he is not content, only to have commanded us to do this, or to require it of us as bound in duty, but promiseth also that great fruits and advantages shall redound to us thereby, affirming that by this means his greatest and highest worship is given unto him; for he is the great Lord, whom we serve, who hath many and divers kinds of service, and manifold manners of worship, and whom we may serve divers ways; but this only service which is given to him by hearing the word, doth excel all the rest; for if any where a faithful man of the country, or a citizen, or any which is otherwise in subjection doth serve his Lord or Master, he doth by the same service also serve God; likewise a child, a man servant, or a maid servant, if they be obedient, and do diligently that which belongeth to their duty; also a prince and parents if they govern well, and do their duty faithfully; they all do serve God; for it is his will and commandment which he requireth to be fulfilled of us. Of such services and kinds of worship the world is full. For to every one in his state his works are committed and injoined of God, whereby he daily

daily both ought and may serve him; that there may be left no place for excuse unto any man, as though he were ignorant, how and wherefore he must serve God, neither that any seek after other things, and invent peculiar manners of serving God, which he hath neither ordained nor commanded, and in the mean time neglect that which he hath commanded, as we have hitherto done in our blindness; but before all other services and doings of duties, he hath most highly esteemed and extolled this service both of them that hear, and them that preach his word; and therefore hath ordained also a special day thereunto every week, in which we must apply ourselves to no other business: altho' we serve God by other labours all the week, which he hath bound to no time or certain day; but he hath chosen this day specially, which he hath severely commanded to be kept, whereby men may have time and leisure to perform this service, lest any might fly unto this complaint, that he hath no leisure by reason of his labours and business; moreover, he hath appointed special places also for his service, as among us temples and houses, where we do come together; yea, he hath instituted and kept the whole order of ministers hereunto, giving also other things which pertain to the performing of the charge of this office, as the knowledge of many tongues, and divers gifts beside; and briefly he hath commanded the whole world by a certain special precept, that it think this worship or service holy, and far more excellent than the rest; which he will have so to be delighted in of all Christians, that it may be manifest, how much he doth esteem it, and how acceptable unto him the exercise and handling of his word is; these things I speak to stir you up, and to admonish you, why ye ought willingly to hear the word of God, because it is not only the commandment of God, whereunto we must obey, but we have also most ample promises, that it is a thing acceptable to God, and the greatest worship, whereby we can do honour unto him; and it so far exceedeth other kinds of worship, as the brightness of the sun exceedeth the brightness of the other stars, and the sabbath day, the other days, and in fine, as much as the heavenly

heavenly kingdom excelleth the kingdoms of the world; for here all things are holy and specially chosen, the time, place, person, and that because of the word, which sanctifieth all things unto us; wherefore we must earnestly endeavour, that we take heed unto ourselves, that we fall not into sluggishness, and slothfulness, neither that we be carried away with contempt and loathsomeness of hearing the word, as those delicate and cloyed spirits, which seem unto themselves already to be masters, and exactly to know all things, yea far more perfectly than any can teach them, or as others also, which are soon cloyed with it, thinking, why I have heard this very often, where should I so often hear the same song? they know not how great and marvelous a thing it is, also how great worship of God they so greatly contemn, and neglect with so great slothfulness; wherefore they do after unspeakable means provoke God to wrath, having his commandment so in contempt, and suffering his promise to be made void in them, and as much as is in them impairing and hindering by their example so commendable a worship and service of God. But admit it to be true, which is not, that thou dost understand all things perfectly, and as wise and skilful as Christ himself: yet thou seest how earnestly he performeth the office of preaching, and applieth himself unto this work, whereof he was most skilful before, and had not any whit need thereof, as we do greatly need it; so Paul also a Prince of apostles, although he was exceedingly well learned, and so excellent a doctor, yet going through many countries did often and every where preach, neither was he wearied or cloyed; wherefore it is meet that thou be nothing at all weary of hearing this word, inasmuch as the aid and help thereof is exceeding necessary for thee, both against the devil and all other temptations; and although for thy instruction thou shouldest not need it, yet oughtest thou not to be wearied or cloyed, that thou shouldst not bestow a few hours in a day every week upon this worship and service of God; seeing that before, applying thyself to false worship, when thou didst pass

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the whole day in temples, and didst run from temple to temple, from altar to altar, thou felt no tediousness or weariness, neither didst say as thou dost at this day; O, I have heard no new thing, I have heard these things before; but didst think thus; this day and yesterday I went to hear Mass, and to morrow I mind to go to hear it again; how much oughtest thou to do this now, knowing assuredly that this is the right service and worship of God, and to say, altho' I knew most perfectly, as I do not know, yet to give honour and shew obedience unto God, I will do this service, and because of his love and praise I will hear his word, that my Lord may see by this chief worship, wherewith I am especially delighted, that I am willing to serve him; for although no other fruit or profit come unto me thereby, yet I may rejoice that I have performed a most holy and acceptable work unto him, whereunto other kinds of worship and services being compared, are of small importance. Now, he that doth not care for these things, neither is moved with them, reverently to think and highly to esteem of the word of God willingly and earnestly to hear and learn it, whensoever opportunity and means shall be offered, I will have nothing to do with him; for neither may I, neither will I draw any man hereunto violently; he that contemneth, let him contemn still, and remain a swine as he is, even until that day, when God will kill him and throw him down headlong to hell; for such an one cannot be a good man, neither is it a human sin, but a certain devilish obstinacy, so greatly to contemn that, whereunto God hath appointed a place, person, time, &c. Moreover he moveth us by his commandment, lovingly provoketh us by his promises, stirreth us up and admonisheth us by his words, and offereth all these of his own accord, and to be bought with no price or treasure, which is to be far fetched, or hardly come by, the excellency whereof can indeed be countervailed with no gold; add hereunto that it is a worship or service very easy to be done, which may be performed without all labour or grief, but that thou must attentively hear the preacher, or apply

ply thy mouth to speak and read, than which labour none surely is more easy; and altho' it is to be feared, thou shalt bear the cross, and suffer persecution, yet the work itself is so joined with no difficulty, as no other labour is, no not even that that is most easy. If so be that it be not grievous unto thee, to sit the whole day in a tavern or an alehouse, or otherwise with thy companions to trifle and sport thyself with filthy and unseemly jests and pastimes, also to sing and prate, and yet art not weary, neither feelest any labour; thou mayest with a little pain sit in the temple, and hear the preacher, whereby thou servest God, and dost that which is acceptable unto him; what wouldest thou do, if thou shouldst at his commandment carry stones in quarries, or go armed on pilgrimage to St. James? or if some other laborious and painful work should be injoined thee? as hitherto it hath been the custom among us, when as we would do all things willingly, whatsoever was enjoined us, when we were deceived with meer trifles, and most impudent delusions; but so doth the devil blind men, in whom also he worketh a satiety and loathing of the word of God, whereby it cometh to pass that they have no regard what a treasure the word of God is, but live after a beastly sort, contemning all good doctrine. Let us therefore at the last, delight in these things, thinking thus with ourselves, that as often as we read or hear the word of God, either privately or publicly, of whomsoever it be preached, we apply our selves to the chief service of God, which pleaseth God exceedingly well; after this sort thou mayest inflame thyself to hear, and God will inspire thee with his grace, that the seed of his word be not sown in vain, but may bring forth plentiful fruit; the word is never taught without fruit, whensoever it shall be diligently and attentively heard, neither can it be, but that by often hearing it, thou should become better; and altho' for the present time thou seest or feelest no fruit, yet in process of time thou shalt plainly perceive and feel it. But it were long here to rehearse the fruits proceeding of the word, nay, indeed they cannot be all rehearsed

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These things I thought good to speak instead of a preface before the words of St. Paul, to the intent to stir us up more diligently to hear the word of God; and surely there is great need of such an exhortation daily in every sermon, which also is much pertinent unto the text which we have in hand: for Paul in this place reprehendeth curious spirits, which go about by their own wisdom to be masters of the word of God, and do by and by falsely persuade themselves, that they know it well, and that they need not any more the help of any teacher; but turn themselves to trifling and vain jangling, that they may bring forth some new thing, which the common sort may be desirous to hear, presuming also to be Masters of the scripture and of all men, labouring to teach every one, and yet not understanding what they speak, or whereof they affirm; for this is a plague and calamity that followeth, where the word of God is not handled diligently and seriously the learners are weary of hearing, and the preachers slothful in preaching. Hence it cometh that so great companies of hearers slide away, and churches become desolate. Of which calamity vain talking spirits are the cause, which promise new things, that they may win the hearers of the multitudes unto themselves, boasting in that they are masters of the scripture, and yet are always such men as are ignorant, forasmuch as they have never tried, what it is to teach others, which we now now plainly see, and the wrath of God is at hand ready to punish our contempt and unthankfulness; therefore Paul beginneth his epistle to his disciple Timothy so, that he should take heed, that such teachers do not arise, which can talk many things of the law, bringing many new questions and doctrines what is to be done, how righteousness is be obtained, all which they do for ostentation sake, that they may be seen and praised, and seem to be more learned than others, and yet they never came so far as to teach any certain thing, or that which might be counted to be of any importance, but do all things confusedly and out of order: such bablers use only these words, that we must be honest, that good works must be done, and God must be served, &c. but they understand not the sense

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of these words, what they mean; and being asked how we must do good works, now they teach this particular work to be done, another time another work, as offer so much sacrifice at this altar, get thee into this or that monastry, run unto this saint, here erect a chapel to the honour of such a saint, in another place found a mass, light tapers, eat fish, buy indulgences, &c. which being done, they by and by bring another work, and forthwith after that another: so they know not how to instruct after a constant and certain manner of teaching, much less can they say, this is, or in this doth the sum of a Christian life consist, &c. and yet in the mean time those things must be counted, very excellent that they teach, so much do they boast, and promise almost golden mountains, as though they alone were doctors, that might not be gainsaid, and controulers and masters of all other; but he is to be counted an excellent master, and highly to be esteemed, which teacheth the chief point and whole sum of doctrine, viz. how the heart and conscience, yea, and the whole man must live; they know nothing of that thing, though they be very full of words, but do altogether err from the principal point of the law. In the mean time, they intangle the minds of the hearers with such a confused company of words, that they know neither how to make a beginning or end of speaking, as it is uncertain whereunto that disordered company of words doth serve, whereby no man can be made better, much less can he confirm his conscience thereby, as we hitherto have enough and too much seen, and tried in the papacy among our preachers of dreams. What therefore is the sum of that doctrine, which is to be taught to the people? St. Paul answereth, 'The end of the commandment 'is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and 'of faith unfeigned.' This is that Helen, here thou hast the sum of Christian life most excellently and fully comprehended, compendiously and briefly uttered, and which may be not unfitly printed in thy memory; thou must endeavour, if thou wilt not err from the law, but attain to the chief point thereof (that thou mayest know what

what is to be done and what is to be left undone) to have love proceeding out of a pure heart, from a good conscience, and faith unfeigned; if thy love be of this sort, then it is right, otherwise thou erreſt from the meaning of the whole law. Now these words are profound, and comprehend much matter in them; Wherefore we must partly expound them, that they may be the better understood, and that we may accustom ourselves to St. Paul's manner of speech. First, he attributeth to love the sum of the whole law, wherein it wholly consisteth; and to love is nothing else (as I think it is known to all) but to favour and embrace one from the heart, and to shew, and perform unto him all the duties of friendship and good will. Now those jangling doctors also use such words, preaching and boasting many things of love, but all by piece-meal, and particularly applyed to their own trifles and follies; even as heretics, wicked men, and ungracious wretches have love also, but that which consisteth only among themselves, and them that are of the same sort with them, in the mean time, they hate and persecute all good Christians, whom they would willingly accuse of murder, if they could, &c. But this doth not yet deserve to be called true love. If I choose one or two, whose conditions like and please me, whom I do friendly and lovingly imbrace, and no man beside them, it is called a particular love, which proceedeth not out of a pure heart, but from an infected and filthy heart; for true love floweth out of a pure heart when I endeavour as God hath commanded me, to pour forth my love toward my neighbour, and to favour all without difference, whether they be friends or enemies, even as our heavenly Father himself doth, who 'suffereth 'his Sun to rise on the good and evil, and sendeth his 'Rain to the thankful and unthankful,' maketh the earth to bring forth many good things, giveth many, riches, fruits, cattle, and many times, especially unto them that are the worst of all others; but from whence cometh the doing of these things? truly from pure love, whereof his heart is most full. This he poureth forth abundantly upon all, omitting no man, whether he be good or evil, worthy or unworthy; and this is called

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true, divine, entire, and perfect love, which loveth no one, neglecting the rest, neither cutteth nor divideth it self, but imbraceth all indifferently. The other is love of thieves and publicans, if I love him, which is for my turn, and may do me a pleasure, and which esteemeth well of me, and despise him that contemneth me, and which is not on my side; for that doth not proceed from the heart which ought wholly to be good and pure; indifferently toward all, but he that is indued with such love, seeketh his own things; and is full of love himself, and not of love towards others; neither doth he love any man, but for his own advantage sake, regarding only that which may serve for his own use, seeking his own profit by every man, and not the profit of his neighbour, if he be praised and honoured, he laugheth, but being looked upon with sower countenance, or an unthankful word being spoken unto him, he stomacketh, curseth and findeth fault, so that all friendship forthwith ceaseth; on the contrary, he that hath a pure heart must be so affected according to the word of God, and his example, that he favour every one, and bestow liberal and friendly benefites upon them, even as God hath favoured him, and of his divine love hath bestowed benefites upon him; but some men will say, he is mine enemy, and doth evil unto me. Surely he is an enemy also to God, unto whom he doth many more things displeasing unto him, than he can do either to me or thee: but my love ought not to be extinguished or cease, because he is evil, and altogether unworthy thereof; if he be evil, he shall at the last suffer punishment according to his deeds, but his wickedness must not overcome me; But if I can through love rebuke and admonish him, or pray for him, that he may amend, and escape punishment, I must do it readily, I must not be an enemy unto him, or do evil unto him in any wise: for what profit should redound unto me thereby? neither am I made better thereby, and I make him so much the worse: this therefore ought to delight me, if I shall favour him, and bestow benefits upon him, if so be that he will suffer them to be bestowed on him,

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and pray unto God for him, so I may enjoy peace, and have no trouble or contention with any man, and perhaps I may so profit him, that he will change his life unto the better, and amend. Otherwise surely love being divided or separated, I have more bitterness and sorrow by them whom I hate, then I have joy and profit by them, whom I love and keep company with. And this is said to trouble the fountain or water, from whence pure love cannot flow; as it is certain that the Jews also did, against whom Paul speaketh in this place; for they loved them only of whom they were loved, whereby they defiled the sincerity of love with man's affections, and therefore their heart could not be pure; but whereby is the heart purified? I answer, it cannot be purified by any other thing better, than by that sovereign purity, which is the word of God; receive that into thy mind, and order thy life according to the rule thereof, and thy heart is purified; as in this place, see thou set the word before thee, 'Thou shalt love thy neigh-'bour as thyself;' and follow that which it commandeth, and by and by thou shalt see whether it purgeth and cleanseth whatsoever desire there is in thee of thine own profit, or whatsoever love of thyself; for commanding thee to love thy neighbour, it maketh exception of none, either frend, or foe; altho' some men be evil and hath been oftentimes injurious unto thee, notwithstand he doth not therefore lose this name, that he is not to be called thy neighbour, but nevertheless remaineth thy flesh and blood, and is comprehended in these words, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, &c. Therefore I say if thou shalt consider him and so behave thyself toward him, as the word teacheth thee, then is thy heart made pure, and love sincere, so that thou makest no false difference of persons, neither otherwise considerest him, than another, which is good, and one of thy familiars. Indeed, we cannot deny this to be true, that an honest man is more worthy to be loved, unto whom also every one doth more willingly apply himself by nature, than unto the conversation of wicked men, whose familiarity there is no good man that doth not abhor, howbeit flesh and blood is the cause that true and Christian love is not

among us; for a Christian must not derive his love from the person, as the world doth; as some young men seeing a maid, is in love with her because of her fairness and beauty, and a covetous man taketh his love and desire of his money, a lord or prince of honour and power, &c.: for all such love is said to be feigned and proceeding not from whence it ought, cleaving to the good things, wherewith he seeth the person adorned, neither doth it continue any longer, than that which he loveth, continueth, and as long as he may enjoy it; but true love ought to be such as floweth out of a continual fountain, and proceedeth from the bottom of the heart, as a fresh and continual water always springeth forth, which cannot be stopped, and is never dried up. This love saith after this sort; I love thee, not for thy honesty or dishonesty, for I do not derive my love from thy honesty, as from a strange fountain, but out of mine own fountain, that is, out of the word of God which is planted in my heart, which commandeth me to love my neighbour, from hence love plentifully floweth open to all, which have need thereof, watering all both friends and foes; yea, chiefly prepared and ready for foes, inasmuch as they have more need, that they may by my means be brought to amendment, I praying for them, and doing according to my ability that which I am able, that they also leaving their evil ways, may be delivered from sins, and the snares of the devil; and this is said to be love flowing from the heart, and not derived from without; for he that is endued with such love, findeth no such thing in him whom he loveth, from whence he should derive it; but because he is a Christian, because he layeth hold of the word, which is altogether pure by itself, by the power of it his heart also is made pure and repleniſhed with true love. Whereupon he poureth forth the treasures of his love toward every man, neither is he moved or turned away with the person of any whether he be good or evil. Behold should they preach, which will rightly teach love required of the law, whereof our bablers know nothing, neither have any regard thereof, altho' they talk many things of the law, and dis-

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pute much of love. They do not see, no they do not so much as once think, that love must be such, that it flow outoftheheart,and that the fountain must be first pureand clean. This never descended into their heart, although they hear, read, and preach many things of it. They are occupied with very uncertain, and unprofitable cogitations, yea, rather with dead dreams. Wherefore whatsoever is preached of works and of a good life, that only is well done which proceedeth from the word of God, a pure heart, and a true faith; this thou mayest see in all states, how every one ought in his calling to do the office enjoined him, and exercise the works of love. A servant labouring, and thinking no more than thus, My Lord or master payeth me my wages, for which only I serve him, otherwise I would not vouchsafe to look upon him, &c. hath not a pure heart, for he doth not serve but for a piece of bread, or for his hire, which being taken away, his service also ceaseth. But if he were a right and true Christian, he would rather be thus affected: I will not therefore serve because my Master payeth me wages, because he is honest or dishonest, &c. but because the word of God doth speak thus unto me: 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your 'masters, as unto Christ,' &c. Eph. vi. 5. This service proceedeth of its own accord out of the heart, which layeth hold on the word, and greatly esteemeth it, saying, I will serve my Master, and take my wages, but this shall be the chiefest thing for which I do this service, that I may serve my God and Lord Jesus Christ, who hath laid the condition and state of a servant upon me, which I know doth please him in me, &c. Here thou seest a true work, proceeding out of a pure heart; so also let a Lord or Prince, and they which have the charge of governing the common weal, think thus: God hath committed unto me the office of a magistrate, that I should be a ruler; now if I will have regard unto this only, that I may enjoy my dignity, riches, and power, it is certain that my heart is not pure, and yet in the mean time I do the work of a ruler so, that the world cannot complain of me, neither Cæsar or the lawyers can blame or find fault with me by their laws.

Even as neither a servant serving only for wages can be reprehended of the world, whether he seeketh his own things or not. Surely the word of God is not regarded in the office of a ruler that doth so, but his own idol, his own glory, money and power, &c. But if this affection be in his heart: Because I am occupied in this office, wherein God hath placed me, and the word commandeth him that beareth rule to be careful, it is meet that I do execute the same with all faithfulness and diligence, to the praise and glory of my God: The execution of the office of such a rule, endued with such a mind, cometh out of a pure and sincere heart, wherewith God and good men are delighted. There is moreover in him love, which doth not cleave to the person or outward things, but beginneth in the heart, which the word of God maketh manifest, which forasmuch as it is pure and clean, doth also purify the heart; and so his government and works are the meer services of God, and most acceptable sacrifices unto him, seeing that they are done only according to the word of God, and for God's sake. But our talkers cannot teach this, neither are able to judge of it, only crying out when they teach best of all, that we must be honest. They bring a certain juridicial sermon out of the laws of men, as Cæsar and his clerks teach; but how the heart is purified, they have not so much as understood or thought any thing thereof, or how love is to be derived to all states and conditions of men, according to the word of God. Thus must thou say even in spiritual offices and states also; If I or any other shall preach to get some good benefice, whereas otherwise I would easily cease from doing this office, I may preach the gospel, but my heart is not pure, but most plainly polluted. Therefore although I do long and much affirm, that it is a good work and a weighty office, yet I do not perform it aright forasmuch as I do it not from the heart; but then only it is rightly done when the heart hath his affection: Altho' I must get my living thereby, yet this ought not to be the chief end thereof; but because God hath called me unto it, and hath committed it unto me diligently

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to be done, it remaineth, that I do with all diligence labour therein, to the glory of God and salvation of souls, which I do also for the love of the word willingly and from my heart. Hereby I seek neither love or friendship, nor honour, nor thankfulness of men, but my works come from the heart, which I first do, before I obtain any honour, glory reward, money, or favour, although if those come and follow, I may have and receive them without sin. Lo, thus the word is the cause, foundation, ground, fountain and spring of love coming out of the heart, and of all good works that please God, which he can by no means away with, if the heart be not pure before; for neither are works acceptable to men, which are done without the heart, by dissimulation. Now if Cæsar and men require the heart, although they cannot see it, of how much greater estimation is that heart before God, which doth all things for the word's sake: Therefore he also suffereth his word to be preached, that we may order all our life according to the prescript thereof; and let us not suffer ourselves to be hindred, frayed from it, or discouraged with the let or hindrance of any thing, although for it we shall suffer all kinds of losses, unthankfulness, contempt, &c. but let us break and go through all brunts with a bold and manly courage, and say thus: We begin nothing for any man's sake, neither will we leave off any thing because of any man, but that we may do that which is acceptable to God, we will go on still, howsoever things fall out with us. They which do thus, become men excellent and most highly to be esteemed, who are ready to do all duties, and serve God with all readiness of mind, and love not feigned; for the fountain and spring is good, not derived and brought in from without. These things I thought good briefly to speak of the first part, how the heart is purified by the word alone, and not as the monks have dreamed, by a fight taken upon them against evil cogitations, and by feigning of good thoughts; for what thoughts soever thou shalt feign, the heart shall remain unclean, if the word of God be not in it, although it pretend a great shew of a godly life, as Paul witnesseth. But this pure-

nefs whereof he speaketh, doth extend farther than outward and corporal pureneſs doth, which the Jews did uſe, eating and drinking their hands being often waſhed, which our religious men alſo uſe in their faſting diverſity of apparel, orders and rites, &c. for this is called pureneſs of the ſpirit, which we then have, when being inſtructed by the word of God, we know thereby how he is to be ſerved in every ſtate and calling, and endeavour to form our lives according thereunto. Now followeth the ſecond part concerning a good conſcience, whereof alſo we muſt treat, viz. that love muſt come from ſuch an heart, as hath a joyful and quiet conſcience both toward God and alſo toward men. Toward men ſo, as Paul glorieth of himſelf, that he lived ſo, that he offendeded no man, troubled no man, was an evil example and burthen to no man, but all that did ſee and hear him muſt needs witneſs, that he indifferently ſerved all, helped all, councelled all, and dealt friendly and gently with all. Such a conſcience Moſes alſo glorieth of againſt the ſeditious, Numb. xvi. 15. "I have not takenone aſs from them, neither have I hurt one of them. And Jeremiah, chap. xviii. 20. Remember that I ſtood before thee to ſpeak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them. Likewiſe doth Samuel, 1 Sam. xii. 2. I have walked before youfrom mychildhooduntothis day. Behold here I am, witneſs againſt me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whoſe ox have I taken? or whoſe aſs havel taken? orwhom havel defrauded? or whom have I oppreſſed? or of whoſe hand have I received any bribe?" Such boaſting and glory every Chriſtian muſt attain unto that he do ſo live toward every man, and ſo exerciſe and ſhew his love that no man can worthily complain any whit of him, whereby he ſhall trouble or diſmay his conſcience; but that all that will confeſs the truth, may be forced to ſay, that he hath ſo lived, that he hath been an example to every man of living well, which will only but follow him. And this is called a good conſcience before men, or againſt the complaints and reprehenſions of men. And altho' ſuch a conſcience is not able to ſtand before the judgment of God, no nor

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any pureneſs of the heart in the outward life and work of love (we continuing in ſinning oftentimes before God) yet we muſt attain unto ſuch a heart, that we may comfort ourſelves before him alſo, and ſay, This God hath bidden and commanded to be done, therefore I do it with a pure heart and a good conſcience, neither would I willingly do otherwiſe, neither of purpoſe hurt or trouble any man, but whatſoever I ſay or do, that is willed and commanded of God. Let no Chriſtian ſuffer ſuch a confidence to be wreſted from him, that he may boaſt himſelf by the word of God againſt the whole world; for he that hath no regard how he leadeth his life, that he may ſtop the mouths of all blamers and accuſers, and clear himſelf before all, and teſtify that he hath lived, ſpoken, and done well, he, I ſay, is not yet a Chriſtan, having not in himſelf a pure heart and love; for we will not preſume of the doctrine of faith, as though that being had, every man may do what he liſt, whether it be profitable or unprofitableto his neighbour, that we muſt in no caſe do; otherwiſe that doctrine ſhould have the name to give licenſe and free liberty for every one to do what he will. But we muſt ſo behave ourſelves, that we may obtain love out of a pure heart and good conſcience, that no man may accuſe us of any crime.

And although theſe things be ſpoken of our life and works, and a Chriſtian is another manner of man before God, as we ſhall hear, yet we muſt earneſtly endeavour ourſelves in this alſo, that we may be without blame before God. And when we ſhall not attain thereunto, we muſt flee unto prayer, and ſay before God and man, 'Forgive us our treſpaſſes, &c.' that at the leaſt our life may remain without blame, and may obtain a good conſcience before men; and if this cannot be brought to paſs by perfect love and pureneſs of heart, yet let it be done by humility, that we may pray for, and deſire of all men pardon of our offences, when as we have not purely and perfectly done our duty, or are not able to do it, ſo that thy neighbour may be enforced to ſay, altho' thou haſt greatly hurt me, or haſt not done thy duty toward me, as it was meet, yet foraſmuch as thou

humblest thyself, I will willingly forgive thee, and take it in the best part. And for this humility's sake, I say thou art a good man, which dost not stand obstinately, as though thou wouldst advisedly and on purpose offend against me, but dost turn thyself unto love; therefore that life is as yet said to be without blame, which altho' it was subject to reprehension, is with humility covered and reformed, that no man can worthily complain thereof. Thus the law should he expounded and handled, that both love toward every man may rightly proceed out of a pure heart, for God's sake and the conscience may stand before the world; and this ought to have been practised of those vain talkers in their sermons, their cold trifles and vain follies being neglected and left off. But that all these things may stand and be of force before God also, there yet remaineth one thing which pertaineth hereunto, which is that, that followeth. [And of faith unfeigned.] For as I have said, altho' I have a good conscience before men, and do exercise love out of a pure heart, yet the old Adam, that is, flesh and blood remain in me subject to sins, whereby it cometh to pass that I am not altogether holy and pure. And as Paul saith. Gal. v. 'The flesh lusteth against the 'spirit, &c.' And Rom. vii. he affirmeth that he must fight a daily fight against himself, because he cannot do that which is good, and yet he would willingly do it. The spirit indeed would very willingly live purely and perfectly according to the word of God, but the rebellious flesh resisteth the desire thereof, assailing us with many great temptations, that we should seek honour, wealth, riches, pleasure, and should become slothful and negligent in our state and duty. So their remaineth a continual fight in us, because of the impurity of our person, wherein there is not yet sincere pureness, nor a good conscience, and perfect love, unless there be perhaps somewhat before men; but before God many things are found lacking in us, many things are worthy of blame, although all things be perfect before men. For examples sake: Although David can obtain that confidence before men, that he can be reprehended of no man, and the holy Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c.

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do glory and are sure, whatsoever they have done according to their duty, is right and well done, seeing it is the word and commandment of God, wherein they have exercised themselves with a pure heart and good conscience, yet can they not stand by this conscience before the judgment of God, but are compelled to say, If we should strive with thee in judgment, then no man shall have so good a conscience or so pure a heart, which doth not dread thy judgment, and acknowledge himself to be worthy of reprehension and blame; for God hath reserved that prerogative unto himself, that he may contend in judgment with every one, altho' he be holy, and accuse him of deadly sin, neither is there any so holy, whom he may not judge and condemn as worthy of destruction. Wherefore although both the heart be pure and the conscience good before men, yet must thou endeavour to attain unto this also, that the same may be likewise good before God, that he may not find fault with them, but that they may be safe and quiet from his judgment, as they are before men. Hereunto now pertaineth the third part, that is, faith; and this is the principle part and chief precept, containing all the rest in it, that we may know, that where love is not yet perfect, the heart not sufficiently pure, and the conscience not quiet, and God doth yet find something which is worthy of blame, where the world can find fault with nothing, faith must moreover come, and such a faith which is not feigned, and defiled with confidence of a man's own holiness: For whersoever this is not, there the heart is never purified before God, neither shall the conscience be able to stand, if they be examined by severe judgment and exact censure. Men indeed shall not justly blame me, altho' I glory, that I have served them by preaching, helping, governing, and by doing the duty of an overseer or ruler, &c. with all faithfulness; and if I have done any thing more or less than I ought, I am sorry at my heart, for I would very willingly have done all things that I ought. Wherefore I am quiet and already excused, neither have they any more, which they may rightly require of me, but are enforced to acquit and discharge me; but here I must

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attain unto this also, that my heart be so pure, and my conscience so good before God, that he may not by any means accuse and condemn me. Howbeit we find not this in ourselves, although we may glory somewhat thereof before the world, I must therefore obtain some other thing whereunto I must trust, if I shall come into peril, and within the throwing of the dart, as it is commonly said; and I must say to my fearful and terrified conscience, I have done that which I have been able, and who knoweth how often I have done less than I ought? for I could not see and mark all things, as David also saith, Psal. xix. 12. 'Who can understand his 'errors?' Therefore I can lay no foundation of trust upon mine own holiness and pureness. Well, I have the word, or live, love, and have a good conscience, which is pure and holy; but this I want, that I cannot conclude, that that is in my heart; neither do I find so good a conscience in me, as the law requireth of me: For there is no man living in the earth, which can say this truly, I know that I have done all things, and that I do owe nothing before God. But the most holy ones must say thus: I have done surely according to my ability that which I have been able, but I have offended much oftner than I know; therefore our own conscience doth witness against us, accusing and convincing us, although before the world we are most free from reprehension or blame: For it must follow the word which saith, this thou shouldest have done, this thou shouldest have left undone. It cannot avoid the judgment of this, nor answer to the accusation thereof, but it is at the least enforced to stand in an uncertainty, being wholly wrapped in doubting; but if it doubt, then is it by and by convinced, for it standeth not before God, but flieth and trembleth.

Wherefore the principle part of our doctrine must here help us, to wit, that our Lord Jesus Christ being sent of the Father, bid come into the world, and hath suffered and died for us, whereby he hath reconciled the good will and favour of the Father to us, his wrath being appeased, and doth now sit at the right hand of the Father,

Father, having regard of us as our Saviour, and as a continual Mediator and Intercessor for us, making intercession for us, as for them which cannot have and obtain of themselves such pureness and a good conscience: Therefore by his help and benefit we may say before God, Although I am not pure, neither have a good conscience, yet I cleave to him by faith, which hath perfect pureness and a god conscience, whichhe engageth for me, or rather which he giveth unto me; for he alone is he, of whom we read written, as Peter and Isaiah, chap. liii. 9. 'He had done no violence, neither 'was any deceit in his mouth.' And this praise belongeth only unto him, neither hath he any need to pray, 'Forgive us our debts,' neither of that article of the creed, 'I believe the forgiveness of sins, &c.' but he is free and quiet in perpetual, pure and perfect righteousness and pureness, unto whose charge none can lay any thing, nor accuse his conscience of any crime, not man, not the devil, no, not God himself; for he himself is God, who himself cannot accuse himself. And this is called faith neither coloured nor feigned, which the conscience striving and trembling, dareth come forth in the sight of God, and say, Almighty God, I am innocent before the world, and quiet in mind, so that no man can lay any thing to my charge, or find fault with me; for altho' I have not done all things, yet I ask pardon of every one, that he will forgive me for God's sake, even as I again forgive all. By this means I have cut off the complaints of all, who have no more which they may rightly lay against me; but before thee I must lay aside this trust and confidence, and most wholly acknowledge the guiltiness of innumerable sins, and say as David said, Psal. cxliii. 2. 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy 'sight shall no man living be justified;' wherefore I cannot contend with thee, if thou requirest an account of my life, but I appeal from the judgment-seat to the mercy-seat; I do easily suffer, that I be dealt with according to law and right before the judgment-seat of the world, and I will willingly answer, and will do what I am able: Howbeit before thee I will not come into judgment, but I desire grace, which I take hold of on every side; for

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thus the scripture teacheth me, that God hath set two seats before men, the one a judgment seat, for them which are yet secure and untractable, and acknowledge not their sins, neither will confess and acknowledge them; the other a mercy-seat, for miserable and fearful consciences, which feel ther sins, dread the judgment of God, and do earnestly make request for grace: And this mercy-seat is Christ himself, as Paul witnesseth, Rom. iii. whom God hath set forth unto us, that we might have refuge unto him, being not able to stand before God by our own power. Unto him I will apply myself, if I have done or do less than is meet; and how great pureness and goodness soever my heart and conscience have before men, I will have it here to be altogether nothing, and hidden, and covered as it were with a vault, yea, with a fair heaven, which may mightily defend it, which is called grace and remission of sins. Under the defence thereof my heart and conscience must creep, and remain safe and quiet; for so he commanded his apostles to preach and publish, that through his name all that believe in him, shall receive remission of sins. Again, 'He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved,' Mark xvi. 16. And John iii. 16. he saith, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Therefore God hath set forth the mercy-seat unto us, whereunto he leadeth as from the judgment-seat. Let us leave others before the judgment-seat, namely, those proud holy ones, contemners and persecutors of the word of God, where they shall hear sentence according to their deeds. We will suffer these to abide in their circle, until they have humbled themselves; but we will not abide in this circle, but will depart from it as far as we shall be able, into the circle of the mercy-seat, unto which we do appeal. Neither have we invented this of our own brain, but it is the word of God himself, which threatneth horrible judgment to them which come with their own holiness, and trusting thereunto, do hope that they shall be able to stand before God the judge, neglecting the mercy-seat of Christ; for the sentence standeth, that

that they shall be set before the judgment-seat, as Christ saith, John iii. 18. "But he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. He that believeth on him, is not condemned:" that is, shall not come to the judgment-seat, but to the mercy-seat, where there is no wrath or rigour, but grace and forgiveness of sins, all things being remitted which be not pure, yea, being blotted out and so consumed, as a drop of water, is consumed of the heat of the Sun. For where the mercy-seat reigneth, there is nothing else, but meer forgiveness and remission of sins.

This being known, we must exactly understand the difference between the law and the gospel, whereof we often teach. The law draweth us to the judgment-seat, requiring of us, integrity of life, love out of a pure heart and a good conscience, it maketh us also to exercise our selves therein, and must go no further. But when it shall come and accuse thee, and will reason with thee, and have those things to be performed which it requireth, then shalt thou be greatly troubled. For altho' thou hast done them, yet art thou not able to stand before God, before whose judgment-seat, many things are yet found wanting in thee, which should have been done of thee, and thou hast left them undone, neither are they known unto thy self. Whether then wilt thou turn thee? Here the law urgeth thee by all means, and thine own conscience being witness, accuseth thee, requiring the sentence of the judge against thee. Then must thou despair, there is no council or help to be had, except thou knowest to fly from the judgment-seat to the mercy-seat, as for example; admit some bishop die in his own holiness, who while he lived was as it seemed of a good life, and aknowledged Christ, no otherwise than a cruel judge (as hath been hitherto preached of him, neither hath he been otherwise set forth, as he is also wont to be unto such, not of his own nature, for indeed, he is most gracious and comfortable, but because they esteem him for no other in their heart) behold this man is a hindrance unto himself that he

he cannot obtain any grace; for he knoweth no difference of the judgment-seat and the mercy-seat, yea, he is altogether ignorant whether there be a mercy-seat, from which he so erreth, and must be bound to the judgment seat. But we teach thus, that Christ is so to be learned and considered, that we be most certainly persuaded that he setteth before miserable and trembling consciences, that believe in him, not as an angry judge which commandeth forthwith to carry violently them that be guilty into punishment, but as a gentle, loving, and comfortable mediator, between my fearful conscience and God, which saith unto me, if thou be a sinner, and astonied, and the devil laboureth to draw thee to the judgment-seat, then see that thou flie unto me, and fear no wrath or anger. Wherefore? Even because I sit here, that, if thou believe in me, I may make intercession for thee to my father; that no anger and severity may hurt thee; for all anger and punishment shall be sooner laid upon me, than be born of thee. Howbeit that cannot be; for he is the only beloved Son, in whom all grace and favour dwelleth, whom as often as the father doth behold, he cannot but replenish both heaven and earth with grace and favour, and forget all wrath and displeasure; and whatsoever he shall ask of his father, that he shall forthwith obtain without all repulse or denial. So by faith we are made wholly blessed and safe, subject no more to any damnation, yet not for our own holiness and pureness, but for Christ's sake, to whom we cleave by faith as to our mercy-seat, being assuredly persuaded, that with him there remaineth no anger, but meer love, and pardon, and forgiveness of sins. Thus the heart is purified before God, and the conscience made good and quiet, not in respect had of mine own pureness or life led before the world, but by trust and confidence of that excellent treasure, which my heart apprehendeth, which is unto me instead of a pledge and fulness, when as before God I am not able to pay.

But herein the whole force of the matter consisteth that we do again and again take heed, that our faith be not false, or as St. Paul speaketh, feigned; for if this

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err, and deceive as, all things deceive us; for there have been many in all ages, as there be also at this day, which can speak many things of faith, and will be masters not only of the Law, but even of the Gospel also. Who say the same that we do, that faith performeth and and doth all things, but that the law and good works are also to be joined unto it, and that otherwise, if these be not added, faith availeth nothing, in which words they mix and mingle together our life and works, and Christ. But this is not purely and sincerely to have taught faith, but to have coloured, defiled and corrupted faith, so that it can no more be called faith, but a feigned colour and counterfeiting of faith, the trust and confidence of the heart standing not purely toward Christ, as the only mercy-seat, but being grounded upon our own holiness, as being able to stand before the judgment-seat. Wherefore doing thus, we are most rightly cast off before God, and condemned unto destruction, whereof we are most worthy. For if faith must be pure and void of all counterfeiting and feigning, then these two things, Christ and my works must be rightly discerned and severed one from the other. For this is plain even to him that is blind, that Christ and his works are not my life and my works, but are separated from the Law and from the works of all men, yea, and that by the greater distance, than man is unlike or differeth from man. For neither can I say that I and Cæsar, or the bishop of Rome are the same thing, yet I am much nearer and more like unto either of them, than a moral man and a sinner unto Christ the Lord, who is not only a pure an dholy man, free from all spot and blot, but is moreover God also. Therefore let the law and the

ureness of thy heart, yea, and thy good conscience avail in earth only toward men: but where the mercy-seat is, to wit, at the right hand of the Father, and the Mediator between thee and God, neither no man's works and merits ought to have access; much less be they there of any force or value. Wherefore Christ is purely to be separated from all my life, deeds and works, and we must without exception

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conclude, that he is another thing than our life led before men with a pure heart and a good conscience, altho' it be led even perfectly and without blame; for it being presented before God, and by the law brought to the judgment-seat, I am condemned and lost. But Christ is the mercy-seat, and all that cleave unto him by faith, cannot be condemned and judged. So the judgment seat together with the law and all my life go into one part, but my faith must fly and leap far unto another part, and join itself unto him which is pure, and hath no sin, of whom the scripture speaketa, 'he that believeth in him shall not be confounded,' because he is present in the sight of the father, and maketh intercession for me. Moreover he giveth me his own pureness and holiness, that being cloathed and adorned therewith I may be able to stand before God, and all wrath and displeasure may be taken away, instead whereof I may enjoy meer love and favour. Lo, thus faith remaineth pure and free from counterfeiting, for it resteth not upon my works, that because of them it should behove God to be gentle and favourable unto me, as a false and feigned faith doth, which mingleth together man's merits and the grace of God, and although it holds the words of Christ, yet hath it the confidence and trust of the heart reposed in itself, so that it is certain, that it is only a colour which cannot long continue; for the matter cometh at the last to this point, that believing that God is favourable unto thee because of thy life led without fault or blame, thou must despair and say, who knoweth what I have done? whereby am I certain that I have neglected nothing through careleſness, or that nothing is wanting in me? in this doubtfulness of mind the foundation faileth, sliding away under thee like unto sand moved and stirred, and so faith is of no force or value at all: Wherefore it is not unfitly called feigned and painted faith, through which one seeth as it were through a lattise or painted glass, through which the thing that is seen representeth the colour of the glass, and yet is not indeed of that colour; so they believe that that affection is in God, that he vouchsafeth to regard

gard our works and merits; which they paint forth according to their own opinion and dreams, which are utterly falſe, raſh and unadviſed. And ſo judging God and all things according to them, they ſee only as it were through a lattice or painted glaſs. But thou ſhalt only behold him with pure and clear eyes, if thou do well, ſeparate the judgment ſeat and the mercy ſeat one from the other, that heaven with the ſtars thereof may remain pure to grace and remiſſion of ſins obtained by the Mediator, where Chriſt reigneth with his works, and the earth alſo with her trees and herbs, whither we muſt be referred with our works. The matter I ſay muſt be brought to that paſs, if we will ſtand with a right and unfeigned faith before God, that we do purely diſtinguiſh and ſever ourſelves, our life and Chriſt or the mercy-ſeat; and he that will not do this, but preſenteth himſelf before the judgment-ſeat with a bold courage, ſhall feel the reward of his raſhneſs. I myſelf have been in that danger, and as it were a mouſe having taſted pitch have run away, rejoicing greatly that liberty was given to me to attain to the mercy-ſeat, and now I am enforced to ſay, that altho' I have lived very well before men, yet all things committed of me on the contrary, do remain beneath under the judgment-ſeat, to be puniſhed according to the ſentence and judgment of God. Now I have no other comfort, nor no other help and council of my ſalvation, than that Chriſt is my mercy-ſeat, who hath never offended, hath defiled himſelf with no ſin, who died and roſe again for me, and ſitteth now at the right hand of the father, and defendeth me under his ſhadow and protection that I need not doubt, that I am by his benefit and interceſſion ſafe before God from all wrath and terror of judgment. Thus faith remaineth in all things pure ſetting no other thing before itſelf, whereunto it may boldly truſt, but Chriſt alone. Now he that knew this well, ſhould be a man of a reſolute mind; for all other have to do with a feigned faith, boaſting many things of faith, but mingling all things together, like as vintners mix wine with water; by this they ſay, if thou live thus, God will be favourable unto thee, and they make the judg-

ment-seat of the mercy seat, and the mercy-seat of the judgment-seat, which by no means can be, for the judgment-seat shall remain, &c. Wherefore separate these two, one from the other as far as thou shalt be able, that they come not together, namely the life and holiness, together with the judgment-seat into one place, which may drive and enforce thee to have a good conscience, and to lead an upright life before men. But offer thy sins to the mercy-seat to be transferred into another place, where God lovingly receiving thee, will embrace thee as a beloved son, and will never remember more any wrath or sins. If such doctrine of faith were set forth unto men, then should it be excellently well done, and all other things should follow of their own accord, as pureness of heart, and goodness of conscience through right and perfect love. For whosoever is by faith quieted in his heart, and assured that he hath God favourable unto him, who is not angry with him, altho' he hath deserved his wrath divers ways, he doth all things with a glad and cheerful mind. Moreover he liveth so also toward men, that he is loving and beneficial toward all, although they be not worthy of love. He is quiet toward God through Christ the mediator, who will not throw him down headlong into hell, but doth lovingly favour him, and lifteth him up into heaven. And this is the chief quietness, and principle point and foundation of our salvation. Afterwards he doth in his life shew himself dutiful also towards his neighbour, doing all the best things he is able unto him, whatsoever his state or duty commandeth or requireth; and when he doth less than is meet, he asketh pardon of his negligence before God and men, so that there is left occasion neither to him, nor the world afterward to rebuke him, power also to devour him is taken from hell, and to tear him in pieces, from the devil. Thus a man is said to be in all things perfect, toward men by love, and toward God, not by the law, but by Christ, whom he apprehendeth by his faith as the mercy-seat; which engageth his holiness for the believers or rather giveth it to them, so, that in him they have all things that are ne-

neceſſary to ſalvation. Now this is right and pure doctrine, which ſhould be exerciſed and taught unto men diſtinctly, that they might know how they may be able to ſtand both before God and man, that faith and love be not mingled together, or life referred both to God and men. This ought to have been performed of thoſe glorious and arrogant teachers, ſeeing that they will be counted maſters of the law, that the difference of the law and faith might be well known unto all. For altho' it be taught and repeated with never ſo great diligence, yet notwithſtanding it is very hard to be well and thoroughly learned, eſpecially to us which have been inſtructed and trained up in the doctrine of works, and led only to the law and our own works. To theſe may be added our nature alſo very prone and ready by itſelf hereunto, and now brought into a cuſtom, whereby it is confirmed, and in continuance often turneth the heart alſo into exerciſe and uſe, ſo, that we cannot abſtain, nor think otherwiſe, but, that God will be favourable unto us, which have done ſo great works, and have led our life ſo without blame or fault. Therefore we muſt ſtrive againſt both our nature and cuſtom. For ſurely it is a very hard thing to think or be perſuaded otherwiſe, and ſo purely to put a difference between faith and love, the filth ſtill hanging upon us and cleaving unto us, altho' we be now in faith, ſo that our heart can ſcarce rule itſelf, that it ſay not, So long time have I taught the goſpel, ſo I have lived, ſuch great works have I done, &c. And we would very willingly have God to regard our life, and turn his mercy-ſeat for our cauſe into a judgment-ſeat. Thou mayeſt uſe this boaſting toward men, I have done well to all as I have been able, and if any thing be wanting, I as yet will endeavour to make a recompence; but if thou be minded to go to God, I adviſe thee to ceaſe from ſuch arrogant boaſting, and to think to appeal from judgment to grace.

Let who will begin and prove this thing, he ſhall at length ſee and try how grievous and hard it is for a man that hath been occupied all his life time in the works of his own holineſs, to eſcape out, and with all his heart by

faith to cleave to this one Mediator, I myself have now preached the gospel almost twenty years, and have been exercised in the same daily, by reading and writing, so that I may well seem to be rid of this wicked opinion, notwithstanding I yet now and then feel the same old filth cleave to my heart, whereby it cometh to pass that I would willingly so have to do with God, that I might bring something with myself, because of which he should for my holiness-sake give me his grace. And I can scarce be brought to commit myself with all confidence to meer grace, which I should do; for we ought to fly only to the mercy-seat, forasmuch as God hath set it before us for a sanctuary, which must be the refuge of all them that shall be saved. Wherefore is not to be marvelled at, if it be grievous unto others, so purely to apprehend and lay hold of faith; but especially to such as be yet hindred and entangled of devilish preachers, of whom St Paul speaketh, which cry out against the doctrine of faith, and in these words urge the works of the Law, 'Do this and thou shalt live: Also, If thou 'wilt enter into life, keep the comandments, &c.' which indeed are true and right, if thou didst also rightly understand them. Declare unto me the true meaning of these words, otherwise I know sufficiently already, that I ought to be righteous and keep the commandments. But how must I attain hereunto? or what is it to be righteous? If thou sayest that it is to have a good conscience and a pure heart, and to do all things that God hath commanded; well, be it so, but hear ye then: go to, perform me that, or at least shew one, that dareth say, that he hath performed it; for thou shalt not yet so purify my heart and conscience with thy doctrine, that God cannot accuse and condemn me. But now the law (as it hath been sufficiently declared) requireth such a heart, as hath a good conscience before God. How therefore do we obtain such a conscience? This is the question and the cause, whereof the controversy is. Truly it cometh not hereof, because thou teachest the judgment-seat, that is, the law, but from hence, for that we have a pure and unfeigned faith, which layeth hold

hold of Christ, in whom it most fully obtaineth all things which the law requireth. So at length all things are brought to pass in me, having a good conscience, inasmuch as I am now made righteous and justified before God. For although that many things be as yet found wanting in me, yet he standeth on my side, who hath so much righteousness as wherewith he is able to supply both mine and all mens defects. Thus we shew the way whereby we are made righteous before God, when as they, when they teach best of all, shew only the way to attain to honesty, and righteousness, which is of force and value before men, contending that it ought to be of force before God also, mingling together all things in one, inasmuch as they have no certain knowledge thereof, understanding not what they say or what they affirm. For to what end tendeth this thy immoderate try? 'He that will enter into life, let him keep the commandments, &c.' in which words thou shalt not shew the way to attain righteousness; for descend a little into thy self, and examine thy self diligently, then shalt thou find thy self to have been in time past conceived and born in sins, and to live in the same now, and not able to perform that which the law requireth. Why therefore dost thou seduce other with vain words, saying, be thou righteous, and thou shalt be saved; which is to no purpose, neither followeth there any fruit thereof, the way being not shewed by which we attain to justification? I hear the words well, what things the law requireth, but how shall we attain unto ability to fulfil them? Then speakest thou to me again, and sayest, thou must do good works. But how shall I stand before the judgment of God, if I have long and much wrought good works, and am righteous before men, as thou teachest me? How shall I be certain, that I seem such a one to God also? For here my heart and conscience are ready to witness the contrary against me. Howbeit I should have been thus taught of thee, as St. Paul commonly teacheth, that righteousness must proceed from faith unfeigned, and before all things the mercy-seat must be laid hold of, from whence all things that are wanting in us are to be taken. And so indeed these

words, keep the commandments of God, are rightly to be understood. For the law requireth perfect righteousness in thee, being of force as well before God as before men; thou having obtained this, go forth into the company and assembly of men, and exercise love, and do good works. By this order and means, something is brought to pass, and such sayings of the scripture are fulfilled. For so man doth that which the law requireth, first, before God, not by his own strength or virtues, but by Christ without whom we can do nothing before God, and secondly, by his own endeavour before men, and he is now perfectly righteous, inwardly by faith in Christ, and outwardly also by his works, yet so that there is no place among men for mutual pardoning of offences. Therefore the righteousness of Christians doth much more consist in forgiving, than in their own works. Those vain praters do pervert the order of this doctrine, and without preaching of forgiveness, do teach that works only are to be urged. Lo, thus St. Paul reprehendeth the error and ignorance of them, which speak much of the law, and repeat it in daily sermons, and yet they themselves do not understand to shew the way, how the law must be fulfilled, knowing nothing so well as to babble forth and often to repeat these words, that the Law, the commandments are to be kept, if thou wilt be saved, good works must be done, &c. As they do at this day, fill all books with such confusion of words, and in all sermons utter nothing else, than such vain babbling, which they themselves understand not. But they never say a word of those things, whereof St. Paul here speaketh, namely of the sum of Christian doctrine, how love must flow out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, they say no more, but keep the commandments. They levelling at the true mark do never hit it; therefore they corrupt and falsify all things, love the heart, the conscience, &c. For the head of the fountain is wanting, that is, sincere faith, which if it be not right and sound, all things must needs be corrupt, which shall flow and proceed from it. And whatsoever they teach, it is a conceit of their own imagination,

imagination, and like to delusions, not unlike also to those things, that are seen through a lattice or glass, which resemble the colour of the clear glass, and yet indeed are not of that colour. They think that God will regard them, when they live so before men, as it seemeth good to their obscure opinion; but if God were of that opinion, he might then have well kept still Christ and the Gospel; for what need or necessity should move him, to send Christ from heaven, who should purchase that unto us with his precious blood, which we ourselves have before with us? He surely should be the foolishest of all men, which would pour forth a precious treasure, which no man needeth. Thus thou seest how these men teach their own dreams, whereof they themselves know or have tried no certainty, neither do any thing else but fill men with errors, being not able to declare, how that which they teach is to be attained unto. They draw men unto works, whereby they confirm them in their old nature and custom, out of which they were to be drawn. These truly are grievous and odious men, and not unworthily sharply accused and reprehended of St. Paul: and it appeareth that they were of no small authority and estimation, seeing that he pronounceth of them, that they were called and would be counted doctors of the law, and far greater and worthier than the apostles themselves: Wherefore we must endeavour to lay up and print this text even in the bottom of our heart, for it is excellently well ordered, and is pure and perfect doctrine, teaching how we must be righteous before God and men, as the law requireth, that these three may be as it were conjoined in us, namely, a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned; and that our life may flow out of all these, and be occupied and led in them, then have we attained, and fulfilled the meaning of the law. Howbeit, we must most diligently take heed, and endeavour to draw Christ unto the law, who is the end and fulfilling of the law, and our righteousness and fulness before God, which we find not in our selves, and without faith shall never find, altho' the law be taught and often repeated with-

out understanding and knowledge; and these things may suffice to have been spoken at this present for the exposition of this place.

SERMON XVI.

Of the Question of the Pharisees, and Answer of Christ concerning giving Tribute to Cæsar.

Mat. xxii. 15. to the 22. *Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might intangle him in his talk, &c.*

IN this text is set forth unto us, how subtile reason and man's wisdom agree with the wisdom of God and how fully reason stumbleth when it striveth to be even most subtile and wise, as it here falleth out with the Pharisees, who notwithstanding were the best and most wise of the Jews, which even by this their subtilty they declare nevertheless their wisdom is here proved to be foolishness; they could blame Christ neither for his preaching not for his works, and yet would they willingly have had occasion to put him to death wherefore they thought to set upon him most craftily and wickly, propounding a subtile question unto him, the subtlety whereof was such, that man's reason was not able to comprehend it, than which a subtiler could not be invented; and thus they speak unto him: Mat. xxii. 16, 17, "Master we know that thou art true and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men, Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?" Here think they, we shall intrap him, for he shall be compelled to answer that tribute is either to be given or not to be given. If he affirm that it is to be given, we have overcome him, but if he deny that it is to be given, then is he guilty of death. Whereas they say, master, they will thereby move him,

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and as it were constrain him to answer the truth. But whereas they say, 'We know that thou art true,' they do thereby put him in mind of his duty. Whither therefore should Christ turn himself? for there seemeth to be no way for him to escape, yet he would not for all that fall into their net. Was not this a subtile question? Do they not shew themselves to have been sufficient crafty, and wily ones? for which way soever the Lord had answered, he had been taken. Was not this done also full warily and circumspectly? for they associate to themselves the ministers of Herod, thinking no other but to intrap him with deceit, that he should not by any means escape, thus casting in their minds, Now we will meet with him well enough, if he deny that tribute is to be given, the Herodians are present, which shall forthwith put him to death as a seditious fellow, and one that resisteththeRoman empire; but if heaffirm that tribute is to be given he speaketh against the liberty of the Jews, then will we stir up the people against him. For the Jewish people would be free, and have their king of their own stock, even as it was promised them both of Moses and God, that their kingdom should continue until the time of the true king, that is, of Christ; even as the patriarch did prophesy thereof: 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-'giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come,' Gen. xlix 10. And therefore God did choose this people especially to himself and made a kingdom of them, only for Christ's cause. Moreover, there were many sentences in the Scripture which declared, that they should serve none, 'For theyshould be the chiefest and not the lowest, '&c.' Deut. xxviii. 13. This and such like sayings the Scribes had beaten into the peoples heads, wherewith they were greatly disturbed;even as at this day it is put into the peoples mind, that the church cannot err, Hereupon the Pharisees thought thus: If he affirm that tribute must be given, he blasphemeth God, he shall be guilty of death, as one injurious to God, and then shall be stoned of the people. For God hath granted and promised liberty unto this people,and they were all even

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in the midst of captity the people of God. Howbeit at that time they wanted a King, as they do at this day, wherefore divers tumults, seditions, and uproars were stirred up among them; for they were taught by the law, that they should have a King of their own flesh and stock, as it is said before, wherefore they did incessantly strive against strange kings and governments, until not a few of them at times were beaten and slain: neither did this happen seldom for they were a stiff-necked, obstinate, and unruly nation, and therefore the Romans, which at that time did bear rule over them, did very circumspectly govern them, and divided the land into four charges of government, that being on every side kept in awe by the governors, and presidents, they might not so soon flock together and move sedition, and that they might also be more easily resisted if at any time they should rise against the Roman empire. Wherefore Pilate was appointed of the Romans lieutenant of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip, tetrarch of Itarea, and of the country of Trachonities, and Lysamas the tetrarch of Abilene, as Luke rehearseth them; and all this was done that they might keep the Jews under, whereupon the Jews were inflamed with anger, and in a rage and fury, but especially in the time of Christ they would willingly have a king. Wherefore the Pharisees, having found out this device, thought thus with themselves, Well, we have the matter now at a good stay; the Romans callenge to themselves the government, now if he answer unto the question that tribute is not to be given, the lieutenant is at hand, and ready to put him to death; if he answer that it must be given, he shall stir up the people against himself, and so we shall assuredly by this means intrap him; thus they supposed that either they should find cause of death in the Lord or at the least make his doctrine to be nothing set by of the people: As the Jews here do, so also do we, the chief and necessary things being left, we are occupied about other matters not necessary. The Pharisees here move a question, whether they be free or otherwise; forasmuch as they had the law and the word of God, they supposed that they ought to be subject to none,

none, but to their own king, yet they were now compelled to obey Cæsar emperor of Rome. They had scripture concerning the love of God and their neighbour, but that being left, they are occupied about other matters. It was promised unto them, if they obeyed the precepts and commandments of God, that they then should be a free people; they disobey and neglect God's commandments, and yet notwithstanding they will be free, and have their own king. In like manner falleth it out with us, we earnestly challenge to our selves Christian liberty, and yet we think, that if we do those things that seem good in our own brain and fancy, we are thereby Christians, both faith and charity being of us neglected. But what doth Christ, the Pharisees so subtilly setting upon him? he striketh them with their own sword, and intrappeth them in their own device, whereby they thought to have intrapped him, answering neither of those things which they hoped he would, as the Evangelist doth more at large describe, saying; "But Jesus perceived their wickedness and said. Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's." Here thou plainly seest the wisdom and marvellous dexterity of Christ, he willeth the tribute money to be shewed unto him, and asketh of the image and superscription thereof; They answering that it is Cæsar's, he very well and most freely inferreth, that they are under Cæsar, unto whom they were compelled to pay tribute: as if he said. If ye have so let in Cæsar, that his money is coined with you, surely he beareth rule over you, as though he should say, It is come to pass through your own fault that Cæsar ruleth over you. What should they say or do unto this question? They marvelled and went their ways, they thought that they should notably have overcome him, but for all their subtility and wisdom they were deceived. This is written for our comfort, that we which are Christians may know that we have such wisdom, as exceedeth all wisdom, such strength and righteousness, as whereunto no strength and righteousness of man is like; for against the holy Ghost there is

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no council; this power and strength we obtain through Christ, that we may tread sin under foot, and triumph over death. When Christ dwelleth in us by faith, we have him which bringeth to pass such things, howbeit, they are not throughly felt but in time of temptation. Wherefore when I stand in need, he is present, and giveth unto me strength, that I may couragiously pass through. We must not therefore be afraid that our doctrine shall perish and be put to ignominy and shame. For let all the wise men of the world rise against the word of God, yea, and be never so circumspect, and set themselves against it, yet shall they have the foyle and be overcome. It may be that they bark and bite, so that it seemeth unto men, as though they would destroy the gospel, but when they have set themselves against it to extinguish it, they shall no whit prevail, but in the snare that they have laid for others, they themselves shall at length be taken: as we hear in this text, and commonly in St. Paul, but especially in the history of St. Stephen, where we read how vainly his adversaries used the scriptures, yea, those that they used were against themselves. For the Jews did accuse St. Stephen, that he had spoken both against the temple, and against God which commanded the temple to be built, bringing and alledging scriptures, whereby they thought to convince and condemn him. But St. Stephen being full of the Holy Ghost, shewed them in order out of the scripture, how that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands: David would have built him a house, but God refused it. What was the cause hereof? A long time before David was born, God dwelt among his people. He surely should be a miserable God which should need a house, and so he confirmeth by many histories that God doth not dwell in houses or temples made with hands. What should the Jews do here? they did manifestly acknowledge their own scripture, which they had brought against St. Stephen. So all shall be put to shame and overthrown, which set themselves against the wisdom and word of God. Wherefore let no man be afraid, altho' all the wisdom and power of the world strive against the gospel, altho' it would extinguish it even by shedding of blood.

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For the more blood that is shed, so much more is the number of Christians increased. The blood of Christians, saith Tertullian, is seed whereof Christians grew. Satan must be drowned in the blood of Christians. Whereof it is not violence and force that is able to suppress the gospel; for it is like unto a palm-tree, which hath this nature and quality, that altho' a weight be laid upon it, yet it always riseth and lifteth up itself against the weight. Such a nature also hath the gospel, for the more it is striven against, so much the more are the room thereof spread abroad, and the more mightily that it is oppressed, by so much doth it more and more grow and increase: wherefore there is no cause that we should be afraid of power, but rather that we should fear prosperity and merry days, which are able to hurt us more than anguish and persecution. Neither let us be afraid of the subtilty and wisdom of the world, for they cannot hurt us, yea, the more that they strive against the truth, so much more pure and clear is the truth made. Nothing therefore can come better to the gospel, than when theworld with his force and wisdom setteth itself against it; the more vehemently sin and Satan do fight against my conscience, so much stronger is my righteousness made: For if sins do agree and disquiet me, I do then more ardently pray and cry unto God, and so my faith is more and more increased and strengthened. This it thatwhichSt. Paulmeaneth when hesaith, 'Mystrength 'is made perfect in weakness,' 1 Cor. xii. 9. Forasmuch therefore aswe have so great a treasure, whichis increased and strengthened by persecutions and adversities, there is no cause that we should be afraid, but rather that we should with a cheerful mind rejoice in tribulation, as St. Paul saith, Rom. v. according as the apostles did, who with great joy departing from the councils, gave God thanks, that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for the name of Jesus, Acts v. 41. If the devil were endued with such wisdom, that he would be quit, and suffer the gospel to have free course, he should not suffer so much lofs; forwhen the gospel is not impugned, it is as it were wasted with rust, neither hath it occasion to shew forth the virtue and power thereof. We live

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therefore here secure as yet, for no man striveth against us, wherefore we continue still as we were before, yea, alas, we become worse and worse; whereas some of our adversaries have set upon us by writing, that pertaineth to a few. Forasmuch as they have written against us, they have thereby done nothing else, but as it were blown the fire; but if we had been thrown into the fire, or slain with the sword, the number of Christians would be greater among us. Wherefore this is a comfort unto us, if we at any time be tempted, that Christ is ready to help us, and reigneth among us, yea; he is so near unto us, that always through him we may overcome, as long as we believe and trust in him: Howbeit when we are touched with no adversity, he doth little or nothing, but when we are fought against and oppressed, he is present; and bringeth all our enemies to confusion. We have moreover to learn here that they which are wise and mightier than other, which are endued with the chief gifts of understanding and nature more than other, which excel in greater industry, learning, and readier capacity than other, which are fit to oversee other, and can govern all things best, that they, I say, do many times most of all other resist God and faith, and trust more to their own strength and reason than to God; for they are carried so far by their venomous nature, that they neither can nor will use those things to the advantage and profit of their neighbour; but trusting to their own gifts and ability, they hope that now they shall obtain this, now that, neither do they think that they shall have need of God's help also thereunto: As it appeareth here in the Pharisees and Scribes, who were certain, as they supposed, that if they so set upon the Lord, it could not be, but that they should then intangle him; for it is impossible thought they, that he should here escape us, we shall here hold him as it were fallen into a net, whether he affirm or deny that tribute must be given. Mark how subtile and perverse the wit of man's nature is, which is here very lively set forth. There is nothing else in man but wickedness, delusion, guile, deceits, laying, fraud,

fraud, and all kind of evil, yea, of nature man is but lies and vanity, as the 116th Psalm saith. We must not trust any man in any thing, do not persuade thyself, that any man speaketh the truth unto thee, for whatsoever man speaketh is a lie. Why so? The fountain or spring head, that is, the heart is not sincere, wherefore neither can the rivers be pure; and for this cause the Lord doth commonly call men the generation of vipers, and a brood of serpents. Is not this a goodly title of man? Let any man now go, and glory of his own righteousness, strength or free will Before the world indeed some man may be, and gloriously appear godly, righteous and holy; but there is nothing else but a generation of vipers and brood of serpents, but that especially in those that seem most excellent, most precious, most wise, and of greatest understanding. If thou go through even all the histories of the Greeks, Jews and Romans, thou shalt find the best and wisest princes of all, which have governed the affairs of their empire prosperously, thou shalt find, them I say, to have thought nothing of God, but only trusting to themselves, to have acknowledged nothing as received from God; hereupon it is gathered, that the less a man excelleth in wisdom before the world, so much less doth he commit against God; for they that excel in counsel and authority before the sight of the world, do for the most part deceive and lie more than others, thinking that if they deal by delusions and deceit, their fraud and iniquity is not perceived, for they can after a pretty sort cloak their craft and subtility. But the Holy Ghost hath a most clear and bright sight, which they cannot avoid, but they shall be espied. The scripture doth often call such, lions, wolves, bears, swine, and cruel beasts, inasmuch as they rage, devour and consume all things with their fraud and deceit; wherefore in the Old Testament the Jews were forbidden to eat of certain beasts, as of those already rehearsed, and of others, for this one cause especially, that it should be a type and example to us; whereby we may perceive, that there are some men which are strong, mighty, rich, witty, learned, skilful and wise, which are to be avoided and eschewed

eſchewed as a certain unclean thing, and as ſuch as ſeduce and deceive others with their fair ſhew, might, and wiſdom; for neither ſhall they be counted for ſuch, neither will any man think them to be ſuch, as do ſo much as think any evil in their heart, much leſs do it. Wherefore thou muſt put no truſt and confidence in any man, truſt not unto him, for he will deceive thee when ever he is able; again if thou truſteſt man thou art againſt God, in whom thou putteſt not thy truſt It is written in the 17th chap. of Jer. ver. 5. 'Curſed be the 'man that truſteth in man;' and ver. 7. 'Bleſſed is the 'man that truſteth in the Lord.'

Some man may now ſay, How ſhall we do that? One man muſt have dealing with another, otherwiſe how can the life of man continue? We muſt buy, we muſt ſell, we muſt utter and change our wares with men: Now if we ſhould not truſt one another, the whole trade of man's affairs ſhould be in peril, yea, and periſh. I ſay that no man can deny, but that there muſt be mutual dealings among men, and that one doth need the help and travel of another; but this I will have, that whatſoever dealing thou haſt with men, either in buying or ſelling, count it for a thing uncertain, which thou muſt neither truſt nor build upon, for it is certain, that as ſoon as thou ſhalt truſt to man, he will ſeek to deceive thee, foraſmuch as the nature of man, as it is of itſelf, can do nothing but lie and deceive; yea, all things in man are uncertain, both his works and words there is nothing in him but lightneſs and inconſtancy, which thou mayeſt boldly believe to be true. Wherefore all our hope and confidence muſt be repoſed in God alone, and after this ſort we muſt ſay, Lord, give thou me grace that I may direct and order my life, my ſoul, my body, my ſubſtance and goods, and whatſoever is mine according to thy divine will, for I believe in thee, I truſt in thee, do not thou forſake me in ſo perillous dealing with this or that man: I put no truſt in man. If thou knoweſt that it is good for me: make him to deal faithfully with me; if thou knoweſt that it will be to my hindrance and hurt, help me to avoid, it for thy will only pleaſeth me, which I wiſh always to be done.

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As soon as thou thinkest in thy mind, He is a good man, and one that will keep his promise, I am sure that he will not deceive me, but deal faithfully, even then hast thou fallen from God, and worshipped an idol, putting thy trust in a liar. Wherefore when thou hast any dealing with man, think boldly, If he deal faithfully it is well, if he do otherwise, in the name of God let him go, I will commit all things to the will of God, he shall prosperously bring them to pass. Of such a false and ungodly confidence reposed in men, that evil crept in among Christians, namely, the worshipping of saints, whereby the Christian church, that is, the true congregation of the faithful, hath suffered exceeding great hurt, and incomparable ruin; for what other was the service and worshipping of saints but a devilish thing? When as men used to reason after this sort: This man was very holy, that which he taught he did, whom we will follow, and do the like; Hierome, Augustine, Gregory said thus, therefore it is true, and therefore will I believe it Francis, Benedict, Dominick, Bartholomew, lived thus, they did this and that, I will imitate their life and works; moreover, Augustine was saved by this rule, wherefore I also shall be saved by it. Fy, how unstable and miserable a thing is this, they are only lies and dreams of men, there is not in one word mention made here of Christ and his word, but they are only the vain inventions and trifles of men. I would utterly break the rule of Augustine, if he therefore ordained it, thinking to be saved thereby; so blind and without understanding is reason, that it receiveth the dotages and vain inventions of men, when as notwithstanding the word of God only is to be received in matters of salvation, as if Herod, Pilate, Caiphas and Annas should preach the gospel, I ought to receive it. Again, if those that are counted holy, should rise and preach lies, also rules, habits, shavings, ceremonies, and such like vain inventions of men, I ought in no wise to receive them, for we must here have respect not to the persons, but to that which they preach. Dost thou presume to be wiser than all the fathers and saints, than all the bishops and princes of the whole world? Thus may some object

against me. Far be that from me, for I do not contend to be wiser than they; but this without controversy is thus, that whosoever is wise, great, liberal, mighty and strong before the world, doth seldom or never agree with the word of God; for so it falleth out, that they that are such do for the most part persecute the gospel, and if they were not so great, the gospel should not so greatly shine forth and triumph. The Roman Emperors Hadrian, Trajan, Diocleſian, were the most wise Cæsars of all, whose government was so liked of, that it was praised of the whole world, yet they persecuted the gospel, and could not abide the truth; the same we find written of the kings of the Jews, as of Ahaz and others, which governed their kingdom very well, yet despised the word of God, and disobeyed his commandments. We in our time had never such emperors or princes, as are comparable to them; but it ought to be verified in these, that God would by foolish preaching confound the wisdom of this world, as Paul saith, 1 Cor. i. All these things are shewed unto us in this text, which we have in hand, which hath a simple and slender shew and appearance of itself, but it containeth many things in it most worthy the noting. Now how the Lord concludeth with the Pharisees, when they had shewed him the tribute money, and had answered that it was Cæsar's image and superscription, the Evangelist declareth, saying, 'Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are 'Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's.' Although they had deserved no such thing of the Lord, nevertheless he teacheth them the right way; and in these words he confirmeth the sword and office of the magistrate: They hoped that he would condemn and resist him, but he doth nothing less, for he commandeth and praiseth him, commanding that they give unto him those things that are his. Whereby he plainly will have, that there be magistrates, princes and rulers, under whose government we must live; neither must we care whether they use and exercise their rule and authority well or ill, we must have regard only to their power and office, for their power and authority is good, inasmuch

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as it is ordained and instituted of God; neither is there any cause why thou shouldest find fault with power, if at any time thou be oppressed by princes and tyrants, for whereas they abuse the power given unto them of God they surely shall be compelled to give an account thereof. The abuse of a thing doth not make that thing evil, which is in itself good; a chain of gold is good, neither is it therefore made worse for that a harlot weareth it about her neck, or if one should put out mine eye with it, should I find fault in the chain therefore? In like manner the power of the prince must be born, for if he abuse his office, he is not to be counted of me as no prince, neither belongeth it me to revenge or punish it in him, I must obey him for God's cause only, for he representeth the place of God. How grievous things soever magistrates shall exact, I must for God's sake bear them all, and obey them, so far as they be not contrary to God's commandments; if they do justly or unjustly, it shall in due time appear. Wherefore if thy substance, life and body, and whatsoever thou hast should be taken from thee by the magistrates, thou mayest say thus, I willingly yield them unto you, and acknowledge you for rulers over me, I will obey you, but whether you use your power and authority well or ill, see you to that; moreover, whereas Christ saith, 'Render therefore unto Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar's: and unto 'God, the things that are God's.' We must understand that unto God pertaineth honour, we must ackowledge him for the living, omnipotent and wise God, and ascribe unto him what good thing soever can be named; and altho' we do not give him this honour, he notwithstanding easily keepeth it, for nothing is either added to, or taken from him by our honouring. Howbeit in us he is true, omnipotent and wise, when as we count him so, and believe that he is such an one, as he suffereth himself to be said to be. Now unto Cæsar and the magistrate fear, custom, tribute, obedience, &c. are due; God requireth especially the heart, the magistrate the body and goods, over which he executeth his office in the place of God, which St. Paul doth most notably in plain and manifest words declare, Rom. xiii 1. "Let

everysoul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour." And therefore also are magistrates ordained of God, that they may defend and maintain public peace, which alone exceedeth all wordly good things: We felt a little in the last commotion of the common people, what loss, misery calamity and grievous sorrow, conspiracy and sedition bringeth in the world. God grant that it may so continue, that we try it no more. Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken for the exposition of this text.

SERMON XVII.

Of Salvation by Christ alone.

John vi. 44. to the 51. *No man can come to me*, &c.

The sum of the text.

1. CHrist is known of none but of him whom the Father draweth, that is, except the Father teach us that knowledge inwardly in the heart. Therefore Christ saith unto Peter, Mat. xvi. 17. 'Flesh and blood 'hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in 'heaven

heaven. 2. Christ is the wisdom of God which is of more price than precious stones, and whatsoever can be wished is not to be compared unto it, as Solomon saith in the Proverbs viii. 11. 3. The old heavenly bread, that is, the righteousness of the law doth not justify; but Christ, if we believe in him, justifieth for ever.

The exposition of the text.

This text teacheth us nothing else but Christian faith, and stirreth it up in us as surely. John, through his gospel, doth almost no other thing but instruct us, how we must believe in the Lord Christ, and such a faith as is grounded on the true promise of God, made unto us in Christ, shall save us, as this text plainly declareth. Also they are here all proved fools, which have taught us another way and means to obtain righteousness; whatsoever man's mind can invent, although it be holy, although it have a fair shew before men, it must needs utterly fall, if that he will have salvation to come thereby; for altho' man is exercised with the duties of godliness, he shall not be able to attain unto heaven, unless God prevent him with his word, which may offer his divine grace unto him, and lighten his heart, that he may walk in the right way. Now this way is the Lord Jesus Christ, he that will seek another way, as the most part of men with their outward works commonly do, hath now erred from the right and high way; for Paul saith, Gal. ii. 31. 'If righteousness come by the 'law,' that is, by the works of the law, 'then Christ is 'dead in vain' Therefore I say, that a man must by the gospel be as it were bruised and broken, and humbled even from the bottom of his heart, as being frail and weak, which can move neither hands nor feet, but only lieth prostrate and crieth, Help me, O omnipotent God, merciful Father, I am not able to help myself: Help, O Lord Christ, mine own help is nothing. That so against this corner-stone, which is Christ, all may be broken, as he saith of himself, in Luke xx. 17 when he asked the Pharisees and Scribes, "What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon

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thatstone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." Wherefore either let us fall upon it by our imbecility and weakness, by denying ourselves, and so be broken, or else he will break us for ever in his straight judgment. But it is better that we fall upon it, than that it fall upon us; upon this foundation Christ saith in the text, 'No man can come to 'me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: 'and I will raise him up at the last day.' Now he whom the Father draweth not, shall surely perish; it is also concluded that he which cometh not to this Son, shall be damned for ever. He is the only Son given unto us, which may save us, without him there is no salvation; if he help not, our case is most miserable: Of him Peter also speaketh, to the same effect, in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. iv. 11. "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Whither would our divines and schoolmen turn themselves here, which have taught us, that by many works we must attain unto righteousness? Here is that high master, Aristotle, confounded, who hath taught us, that reason endeavoureth to do the best things, and is always ready to the better; but this Christ doth here deny, for unless the Father possess and draw us, we shall perish for ever. Here all men must confess their imbecility and slowness to good things; if so be that any persuade himself that he is able to do any good thing by his own strength, truly he hath reproved Christ of falshood, and with great arrogancy, presumeth to come to heaven, altho' he is not drawn of the Father, Wherefore, where the word of God is in his course, and soundly preached, whatsoever things are high and great, it casteth them down, it maketh all mountains even with the vallies, and overthroweth all hills, as the Prophet Isaiah saith; that all hearts hearing the word may despair of themselves, otherwise they cannot come unto Christ. The works of God are such, that while they kill they make alive, while they condemn they save; as Hannah, the mother of Samuel, singeth of the Lord,

Lord, 1 Sam. ii. 6. 'The Lord killeth, and maketh alive he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.' Wherefore, if a man be thus stricken of God in his heart, that he acknowledgeth himself such a one as ought for his sins to be condemned, he surely is even that very man whom God by his word hath stricken, and by this stroke hath fastened upon him the bond of his divine grace, whereby he draweth him, that he may provide for his soul, and have care of him. He could first find with himself no help nor counsel, neither did he wish for any, but now he hath found the special consolation and promise of God, which is after this sort: 'Every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seek-'eth, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened,' Mat. vii. 8. By such a promise man is more and more lifted up in mind, and conceiveth a greater trust and confidence in God; for as soon as he heareth that this is the work of God alone, he desireth of God, as at the hand of his merciful Father, that he will vouchsafe to draw him. If so be that he be drawn of God unto Christ, undoubtedly that also shall come unto him, whereof the Lord maketh mention here, namely, that he will raise him up at the last day; for he layeth hold on the word of God, and trusteth in God whereby he hath a certain testimony, that he is he whom God hath drawn, as John saith in his first Epistle, chap. v. 10. 'He 'that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in him-'self.' Hereupon it must needs follow, that he is taught of God, and in verity now knoweth God to be no other, but a helper, a comforter, and a Saviour. Hereby is it now manifest, that if we believe, God will be no other towards us but a Saviour, helper, and giver of all felicity, who requireth and asketh nothing of us, but will only give and offer unto us, as he himself saith unto Israel, Psal. lxxxi. 10. 'I am the Lord thy God which 'brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth 'wide, and I will fill it.' Who would not love such a God, which sheweth himself gentle and loving unto us, and offereth so readily his grace and goodness? They

shall not be able, to escape the severe and eternal judgment of God, who do unadvisedly neglect so great grace, as the epistle to the Hebrews saith, If they that transgressed the law of Moses, escaped not unpunished, but died without mercy, how much more grievous shall God punish them, which count the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing, and tread under foot the Son of God? O how diligent is St. Paul in all his epistles to teach how the knowledge of God may rightly be conceived? O how often doth he wish increase in the knowledge of God? as if he would say, If ye only knew and understood what God is, ye should then be safe: Then ye would love him, and do all things that are approved of him. Thus he saith, 'Colos. i. 9. 'We do not cease to pray for you, and do desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, That he might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthned with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:" And Psal. cxix. 34. David saith: 'Give me understanding, and I shall keep 'thy law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.' And thus ye have out of the first sentence of this text, that the knowledge of God doth come from the father, It is needful, that he lay the first stone in our building, otherwise we should labour in vain. But that is done thus, God sendeth unto us preachers, whom he hath taught, and provideth his will be preached unto us. First that all our life and condition, although it have a fair shew and be holy outwardly, is of no estimation before him, yea, is abhorred and loathed of him. And this is called the preaching of the law; afterward he maketh grace to be preached unto us, to wit, that he will not have us utterly condemned and cast off, but that he will receive us in his beloved Son, and not simply receive us, but also make us heirs in his kingdom, yea, and Lords over all things which are in heaven and earth. This now is called the preaching of grace or of the

the gospel; and all this is of God, which raiseth up and sendeth forth preachers. This St. Paul signifieth, when he saith thus, Rom. x. 17. 'Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' This also the words of the Lord mean here in the gospel, when he saith, "It is written in the Prophets; and they shall be all taught of God, Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the father save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.', Whenas we hear the first preaching, that is the preaching of the law, how we are condemned with all our works, then man sighed unto God, and knoweth not what to do, his conscience is evil and fearful, and except help should come in time, he should despair for ever. Wherefore the other preaching must not be long deferred, the gospel must be preached unto him, and the way unto Christ must be shewed, whom God hath given unto us a Mediator, that through him alone we may be saved by meer grace and mercy, without all our own works and merits. Then the heart is made joyful; and hasteth unto such grace, as the thirsty heart runneth unto the water. David had a notable feeling hereof, when he said thus, Psal. xlii. 1. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee: O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.' When therefore a man cometh to Christ, thro' the gospel, then heareth he the voice of the Lord Christ, which strengtheneth the knowledge that God hath taught him, to wit, that God is nothing else but a Saviour abounding with grace, who will be favourable and merciful to all them, which call upon him in his Son. Therefore the Lord saith moreover, John vi. 47, "Verily, verily, I say unto you; He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." In these words

words the soul findeth a table daintily furnished, whereby it may slack all hunger; for it knoweth assuredly that he that speaketh these words cannot lie. Wherefore if it commit it self confidently unto him and cleave to the word, it resteth upon him, and so departeth not from this goodly table. This is that supper, to the preparing whereof, the heavenly Father killed his oxen and fatlings, and hath bidden us all unto it. The living bread whereof the Lord here maketh mention is Christ himself, whereby we are so fed; if we lay hold but of a morsel of this bread in our hearts, and keep it, we shall be satisfied for ever, neither can we ever be pluck'd from God. Moreover, such an eating is nothing else, but to believe in the Lord Christ, that he is made unto us of God as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. i. 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.' Wherefore by and by after the text; when the Jews were at contention about his words, he saith, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you, Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will arise him up at the last day." Manna, which the fathers did eat in the desert (as Christ here saith) could not save from death, but this bread maketh us immortal; if we believe in Christ, death shall not hurt us any thing at all, yea, there is no more death. This the Lord meaneth by these words in another place, where he saith to the Jews; 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death;' John viii. 51, Where it is certain that he speaketh of the word of faith and of the gospel. But some men may say, that the holy die notwithstanding, for Abraham and the holy prophets are dead, as the Jews said unto him, I answer, The death of Christians is only a sleep, as the scripture also commonly calleth it: For a Christian tasteth and feeth no death, that is, he hath the feeling of no death. For this Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom he believeth; hath overcome death, that afterwards he should not feel or taste it, but death is unto him only a passage and gate to life, as Christ himself wit-

witnesseth, John v. 24. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Wherefore the life of a Christian is merry, and on every side repleni shed with joy, and the yoke of Christ easy and sweet. But that it seemeth heavy and grievous unto us, this is the cause, for that the father hath not yet drawn us; hereupon it cometh to pass, that we take no pleasure thereof, neither is the gospel comfortable unto us. If so be that we would lay up the words of Christ well in our heart, they would be unto us an exceeding comfort. And thus ye have heard how we must feed on this bread which came down from heaven, that is, on the Lord Christ, to wit, by faith, which we then do when we believe in him, that he is our Saviour. The whole chapter out of which this text is taken, commendeth unto us nothing else but spiritual meat. For when the multitude followed Christ, that they might again eat and drink, which the Lord himself signifieth, he taketh occasion of the corporal meat which they sought, and almost through the whole chapter speaketh of spiritual meat, as he said, 'The words which I speak are spirit and life.' Whereby he would signify, that he therefore fed them, that they should believe in him; and as they did eat the bodily meat, so they ought also to feed of the spiritual. Here let us weigh and mark this, that the Lord doth so gently and graciously apply himself to us, and offer himself in such gentle words that it ought worthily to move our hearts, to believe in him, to wit, that that bread was therefore given for us, inasmuch as it was behoveful that he should taste death and suffer hellish pains; Also should bear sins which he never had committed, as though he had committed them, and had been his own; and he did also the same willingly for our sakes, and took us as brethren and sisters. This if we believe, we do the will of the heavenly father, which is nothing else but to believe in his Son, and so be saved. As Christ himself saith a little before: "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life." It now therefore appeareth

peareth, that he that hath faith doth the will of God, and eateth of this heavenly bread, as St. Augustine saith, What dost thou prepare thy mouth? believe and thou hast eaten. Of this spiritual supper the whole new Testament speaketh, but especially in this place of John. The sacrament of Christ's body and blood is a certain testimony and pledge of this true supper, whereby we ought to strengthen our faith, and to be assured, that this body and this blood, whereof we feed of the sacrament, delivereth us from sin, death, satan, and all evil. But how may a man perceive and know, that he also doth pertain to this heavenly bread, and is called to this spiritual supper? let him consider the case in his own heart, which is we find so affected, that he doth as it were feel the sweetness in the promise of God, and is undoubtedly persuaded, that he is of the company of them which pertain to this supper, he is assuredly such a one indeed. For as we believe, so cometh it unto us. Such a man hath also by and by a regard of his neighbour, and helpeth him as his brother, careth for him, giveth unto him, lendeth him, comforteth him, briefly doth no otherwise to him than he desireth to be done unto himself; and all this proceedeth from hence, for that the bountifulness and goodness of Christ hath replenished his heart with sweetness and love, that it is a pleasure and joy unto him to do good to his neighbour, yea, and he is grieved if there be none toward whom he may be serviceable. And beside all this, he is tractable and lowly towards all men, he doth not esteem the temporal pleasure and pride of life, he judgeth no man, he defameth no man, he interpreteth all things in the better part. When as he seeth that the matter goeth not well with his neighbour, as that he fainteth in faith, waxeth cold in love, and that his life is not on every side approvable, he prayeth for him, and is sore grieved if any commit any thing against God and his neighbour. In fine, the root, and sap are found, for they are in a flourishing vine, to wit, Christ, and therefore such fruits come forth. But if any be void of faith, and not taught of God, such a one doth not feed on this heavenly bread, neither

neitherbringethforth theſe fruits, for where a right faith is not, there ſuch fruits are always wanting. And therefore St. Peter teacheth us to make our calling unto ſalvation, ſure by good works: where he ſpeaketh properly of the works of love, namely, that we do good to our neighbour, and be affected toward him, as toward our own fleſh and blood. Thus much ſhall ſuffice concerning this text. Let us call to God for his grace.

SERMON XVIII.

Concerning good Works the Fruits of Faith.

Rom. xiii. 11. to the 14. *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of ſleep, &c.*

THE apoſtle in this text teacheth, not of faith, but of works the fruits of faith, ſheweth how the life of a Chriſtian ought to be ordered and framed according to the fleſh outwardly among men. For how we muſt live in the ſpirit and before God, faith doth teach, whereof St. Paul a little before this place hath at large, and even apoſtilicly treated. Yea, if we conſider this text well, it doth not ſo much teach as provoke exhort, move, and ſtir up them which are already taught, what they muſt do. For St. Paul divideth the office of preaching into two parts, into doctrine and exhortation, Rom. xii. Doctrine is, when one teacheth that which was not knownbefore, whereby men are inſtructed and come to underſtanding. Exhortation is, when the preacher moveth and provoketh unto that which is already known, either is neceſſary to be done of him, who will Chriſtianly perform the duty of preaching. Wherefore St. Paul doth very earneſtly apply himſelf to both, and that his exhortation may be more effectual, and may more acceptably enter into the minds of them whom he hath purpoſed to exhort, he uſeth certain elegant and figurative ſpeeches, and doth with an adorned manner of ſpeaking, allure their minds

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unto him. For the words sleep, darkness, light, waking, armour, works, the day the night, which he here useth, are all spoken figurat vely, by which other things are signified, than their nature and propriety do bear: for he speaketh not of the natural night, day, darkness, armour, walking and sleep, &c. but he resembleth by these natural things a certain likeness to our mind, whereby he may more forceably provoke and bring us to those spiritual things; as if he said, ye see how men to get the riches of the present time, which do soon perish, rise early, and laying aside the works of darkness; apply themselves to the works of the day, after the night is passed, and the day is come; with how much greater diligence ought we, shaking off our sleep, to rise early, and casting away the works which we did while it was yet dark, to apply ourselves now to those works which are agreeable to our light, forasmuch as the night is now passed, and the day of our salvation hath appeared?

By sleep he signifieth evil works which are void of faith: for sleep is a work properly meet for the night, and that he meaneth thus, he sufficiently declareth, when he by and by after addeth: 'Let us cast away the 'works of darkness.' So on the contrary, to awake and to rise, signify good works which come of faith. For as sleep pertaineth properly to the night, so to rise is properly agreeable to the morning and day. Whereupon it is said, 1 Thess. v. 4. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should not overcome you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast plate of faith and love, and for an helmet, the hope of salvation For God hath not appointed us to wrath; but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him." It is sufficiently manifest, that the apostle doth not in

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these words, forbid us the sleep of nature, nevertheless he draweth a similitude from natural sleep and waking, to spiritual, that is, to a good and evil life; and to be brief, to rise out of sleep is here the very same thing that the apostle writeth, Titus ii 11. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; Teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." For that which he called in these words, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, he calleth in this text which we have in hand, to arise from sleep, and that which he termeth to live soberly, and righteously, and godly; that he calleth in our present text, to watch, and to put on the armour of light, and whereas he saith, the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared, that he calleth here the day and light, of which we will hereafter speak more at large. Now let us see what likeness there is between natural and spiritual sleep. He that sleepeth naturally, neither seeth nor feeleth any of those good things that are in the world, but lieth among those things which are even next adjoining unto him as it were dead, serving to no use, neither regarding any thing at all. For altho' he live in himself, yet is he as dead to all other. Again instead of true things, he is in dreams wholly occupied with vain images and forms of things, which appear true, and is so foolish, that he embraceth those vain forms, and thinketh them to be true things; but when he waketh, those images do together vanish away, and the man beginneth to be occupied with true things. After the same manner almost it is, when one is as it were swallowed up of ungodliness, for he sleepeth and is like a dead man before God, neither seeth he, neither feeleth any of the good things, which are good things indeed, namely, those spiritual good things, which are promised, and offered him by the gospel, altho' they be just by him; for those things are seen and felt by faith alone, otherwise they are removed from all sight and feeling. Wherefore so long

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as by reaſon of the ſleep of his unbelief, he can have neither any regard or ſenſe of true good things, which are very near him through the goſpel, he buſieth himſelf with the falſe good things of this world, as riches, promotions, and pleaſures, which being compared unto eternal life, unto heavenly joy, and that perfect ſalvation which cometh to the goodly, and altogether as dreams and as thoſe vain viſions, compared to natural things, whereof they are only repreſentations; but when a man awaketh, and hath received faith, all regard and deſire of thoſe falſe good things of this preſent life vaniſheth away, and he acknowledgeth that they are nothing elſe but meer vanity and fallhood, even as thoſe viſions do fade awayquite as ſoon as a man awaketh out of a natural ſleep. Hereof the 76th Pſalm ſpeaketh, "They have ſlept their ſleep; and none of the men of might have found their hands, and Pſalm 73. As a dream when one awaketh; ſo O Lord, when thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their image. And Iſaiah 29. It ſhall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his ſoul is empty; or as when a thirſty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh and behold, he is faint, and his ſoul hath appetite; ſo ſhall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight againſt mount Zion." See how contemptuouſly and diſdainfully the prophets ſpeaketh of the chief power, riches, pleaſures, and promotions of the world, and likneth them to dreams and moſt vain viſions, wherewith they which are aſleep are deluded. What other durſt ſay, that the good things, riches and power of theſe kings, princes, and rich men are nothing elſe but dreams, when as for them, men mingle earth with heaven, fire with water, raging without meaſure and end in the world? but the cauſe hereof is, for that they yet ſleep, therefore they do yet ſee nothing hereof, as they want faith, ſo alſo are they deſtitute of the light. For now is our ſalvation nearer than when we believed. What mean theſe words? Did we believe before and dowe not believe now? Herewe muſt call to mind that which Paul writeth, Rom. i. 1. that God promiſed the goſpel 'by his prophets in the holy ſcriptures, concerning his 'ſon Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, 'that all ſhould by him be ſaved according

according to that which was said unto Abraham, Gen. xxii. 18. 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be 'blessed.' This blessing promised to Abraham in his seed, is nothing else but grace and salvation in Christ offered to the whole world by the gospel, which Paul so interpreteth, Rom. vi. and Gal. iii. For Christ is that seed of Abraham, that is, as he is man, his flesh and blood, by whom and in whom shall be blessed, as many as believe in him, and call upon him. This promise was afterward by the prophets continually more and more declared and preached, for they did all write of the coming of Christ, of the grace which he should bring, and of the gospel, which Peter also witnesseth, Acts iv This promise of God all the faithful believed which died before Christ was born, who by this faith were saved, and obtained salvation in Christ and through Christ. Hereunto Paul now had respect when he said, 'Now is 'our salvation nearer than when we believed;' for that which he saith is this much in effect: We believed in time past, that the promise made unto Abraham should be fulfilled, now it is fulfilled, and those things that we believed should come to pass, are now present: Christ is come, the gospel is revealed and published, and the blessing which we looked for is spread over the world; all things which we tarried for and believed, being promised, are come. And hereby the Apostle signifieth the spiritual day, whereof he speaketh afterward, which is properly the beginning and manifestation of the gospel, whereof we will hereafter speak. Now by this that those things which we believed should be fulfilled are now fulfilled, our faith is not any whit made void or frustrate, but much more sound or perfect; for as they of the old time before Christ's incarnation believed the promise of God which should be fulfilled, so we believe that the same is fulfilled and the faith is altogether the same in itself, but that our faith followed theirs, as the fulfilling followeth also the promise; for either faith trusteth in the seed of Abraham, that is, in Christ, theirs before his incarnation, ours after it. Wherefore he that should at this day believe with the Jews that Christ is to come; should make God a liar, as

though he had not fulfilled his promise, which he hath fulfilled, and being fulfilled would have it published and preached; so also should salvation be yet far from the believers, which we should look for being as yet to come, in the time that shall hereafter follow. Of this double faith Paul speaketh, Rom. i. 17. 'Therein (that 'is, in the gospel) is the righteousness of God revealed from 'faith to faith.' What meaneth this, from faith to faith? Nothing else, but that altho' the faith of the Fathers and our faith is the same, whereby it is believed in Christ either to come, or which hath already appeared; yet the gospel doth lead from their faith to our's, so that it is now necessary not only to believe the promise that was to be fulfilled, but also that it is fulfilled, which it did not behove Abraham and the other father's to believe, although they had the same Christ which we have; for there is one faith, one spirit, one Christ, one communion of all saints, this difference only there is between us, that they went before Christ, we follow him. We have therefore believed, and we do also believe, viz. the fathers and we, with a like and common faith in the same Christ, although not after the same manner, as it is said. And as by reason of this communion of faith which we have alike in the same Christ, we say, We have believed, or we did believe, when as not we, but the fathers have believed, or did believe; so they again did say, that they should hear, see, and believe in Christ, when as not they, but we do live in that time. We read not in a few places of the scriptures, that they which were before the incarnation of Christ, took upon them the person of them which are after it, and they which are after it, of them which were before it, because of the communion of faith, and the same Christ, which they have in common, and so there as it were one company of believers. Now whereas the Apostle saith, that salvation is now nearer unto us than when we believed, that is, when our fathers those antient believers did look for it to come, we must not understand it of the nearness of possession, as though we now had it nearer and more certainly than they, for the fathers had

had altogether the same faith, as it is said, and the same Christ, wherefore salvation was as near unto them as unto us; 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday to day, and 'for ever,' Heb. xiii. 8. Christ continueth the same from the beginning of the world even unto the end, by whom all are saved alike. But Paul speaketh of the nearness of revealing, that whatsoever things were said before concerning Christ, they were now fulfilled; death being overcome, The Lord did sit at the right-hand of the Father, the gospel was preached abroad in the world, by which Christ did come unto all in the whole world; for this cause Paul saith, that our salvation is nearer than when it was hidden, and known unto few men, because that Christ being not yet glorified, it was not meet that the preaching of salvation should be made public or common. Whereas therefore the Apostle saith, Our salvation is now nearer us, he saith the same thing in the Epistle to Titus, chap. ii. 11. in other words: 'The 'grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared,' that is, hath sprung forth, and is every where commonly preached; although it was not hid before in any of the saints, notwithstanding it was not commonly known unto the world. After the same sort the scripture speaketh in many places, when it sometimes saith that Christ is to come, sometimes that he is come, although he always hath been, and is in all the elect; howbeit because he had not before his resurrection come to all by public preaching, the scripture speaketh diversly of his coming; for because of his public preaching he came in the flesh, being made man, for his incarnation had not been profitable to any, if the gospel had not thereupon been preached, by which he came into the whole world, and whereby it is commonly known why he was made man, whereby that blessing promised to Abraham is now published, and made common to all which by the gospel believe in Christ. Hereupon Paul saith very well, Rom. i. 2. that the gospel was promised of God, &c. as though he would say, although God hath promised every where in the writings of the prophets his son in the flesh, yet forasmuch as all that should be done, that the gospel might be preached abroad in the world,

whereby he cometh ſpiritually to the minds of the believers, (which coming only bringeth ſalvation, and is far to be preferred before that coming in the fleſh, inaſmuch as it was done becauſe of this) I ſay rather that God promiſed by the prophets in ſcripture the goſpel concerning his ſon; for God conſidered the goſpel and our faith in all theſe things; for which he would alſo have him to be made man, that the goſpel might be preached of him, that being made man, he hath ſaved us by his death, and that the ſalvation which he hath wrought, might go into the wholeworld, and be made near unto all. Some have taught for comings of Chriſt, according to the four Sundays in Advent, as they call it, but this coming of Chriſt by the goſpel, which is moſt neceſſary of all, and of which all do depend, of which Paul here ſpeaketh; this coming I ſay they could not ſee, inaſmuch as they are ignorant both what the goſpel is, and to what end it was given. They babble many things of the coming of Chriſt, and nevertheleſs they drive him further from themſelves, than heaven is diſtant from the earth; for what can Chriſt profit any man which doth not poſſeſs him by faith? Or how can any man poſſeſs him by faith, where the goſpel is not preached?

'The night is far ſpent the day is at hand:' His meaning in effect is, that ſalvation is at hand; for by the day Paul underſtandeth the goſpel, namely, that it is that day whereby our hearts and minds are enlightned; therefore ſuch a day being ſprung, our ſalvation is certainly at hand, that is, Chriſt and his grace promiſed in time paſt to Abraham, hath ſhined forth by preaching in the whole world, giveth light unto all men, raiſeth all out of ſleep, ſheweth true and eternal good things, wherein we may be hereafter occupied, and may walk honeſtly in this day. On the contrary, by the night all doctrine is to be underſtood, which is not the goſpel, beſide which none can bring ſalvation; but if thou do a little more exactly weigh the words, thou ſhalt ſee that Paul deſcribeth that part of the day which is moſt delectable of all, and moſt full of all pleaſantneſs, namely

namely, the joyful and amiable morning, and the rising of the sun; for it is the morning when the night is gone and ended, and the day is now come, whereupon all things are marvellously cheered and recreated, the birds sing, other living creatures do stir up with alacrity and joyfulness; men being as it were made alive again, do go forth to their labours; all things, the day springing, and the morning shining, are so affected, as though the world were renewed, and all things restored to life again. Wherefore in many places of the scripture, the joyful, prosperous, and quickning preaching of the gospel, is likened to the morning, and to the rising of the sun, as it is here by Paul, who calleth the gospel day springing or arising. Also Psal. cx. 3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." Here also the gospel is plainly called the womb of the morning, and the day of the power of Christ, wherein we are conceived and born the children of God, as dew, to wit, without the labour of men, by the only grace of the Holy Ghost from heaven: the most pleasant comfortable sun Jesus Christ maketh this day, whom the scripture hereupon calleth the sun of righteousness. God saith, Mal. iv. 2. 'Unto you that fear my Name, shall the 'sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings;' for as many as believe in Christ, do receive of him the beams of his grace and righteousness, and do obtain salvation under his wings. Whereupon it is said, Psal. cxviii. 24. 'This is the day which the Lord hath made, we 'will rejoice and be glad in it;' as tho' he had said, thus corporal sun maketh the corporal day, but God himself maketh this day, even he is that sun, from whence those beams and that day come, wherewith the whole world is enlightened. Finally, hereupon he calleth himself 'the light of the world,' John ix. 5. And Psal. xix. 1. 'The heavens declare the glory of God,' that is, even as these bodily heavens do bring the sun and the day, and the sun is carried in them, so the apostles have in themselves, and bring by preaching, the true sun, which is Christ, &c. Whereupon it followeth: "In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming

out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto theends of it: andthere isnothinghid from the heat thereof." All this is said of the exceeding pleasant beginning or rising of this day, that is, of the gospel, which the scripture every where marvellously setteth forth; for it is a word which quickneth, maketh glad, willing, cheerful, and ready to do good works, and finally it bringeth with it all good things. Wherefore it is called the gospel or glad tidings, for that it is a pleasant and prosperous message of the grace of God, and of all good things; but who is able to rehearse all those things, which this day revealeth and maketh manifest unto us? For it teacheth all things, what God is, what we are, whatsoever is past, and to come, of heaven, hell, the earth, angels and devils; by this lamp is shewed unto us, how we ought to behave ourselves inall these things, and toward all, from whence we are, and whither we go. Yet nevertheless Satan hath deceived us miserable creatures, that neglecting such a day, whereby all things might be clear and manifest unto us, we seek the truth of philosophers and heathen men, who have not so much as by a dream known any whit of these things, and so we have suffered ourselves to be blinded with men's traditions, and to be thrust back again into the night; for it is not light, whatsoever is not this day, otherwise Paul and the whole scripture should in vain extol this day alone, and call all other beside it the night. Surely the burthen of God's displeasure must needs be most grievous, for that, contrary to so plain and manifest places of scripture, we have sought another light, altho' the Lord himself calleth himself the light and sun of the world; and if other proofs were wanting, this one is sufficient, that universities do so impudently both set up and glory of Aristotle as a light unto them, in whom they exercise themselves much more than in Christ, yea, nothing in Christ, but altogether in Aristotle.

'Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.' As Christ is the sun,

and

and the gospel the day, so faith is the light whereby to see and watch in this day; for it would not profit, altho' the sun did shine and make the day, if the eyes did not perceive the light. Wherefore although the gospel be begun and preached in the whole world, yet none are lightened, but they that receive it, and by faith being made capable of the light, do arise out of sleep; but to them as yet sleep this sun and day bring no profit, of which they receive no light, no more than if no sun or day had shined. And this is that reason and hour, whereof he speaketh: 'And that, knowing the time, that 'now it is high time to awake out of sleep, &c.' It is a spiritual time and season, altho' begun in this outward time, as it doth daily also come, wherein we ought to arise out of sleep, and lay aside the works of darkness; whereby Paul sheweth that he doth not speak to them which are yet void of faith, for, as it is said, he teacheth not faith here, but the works and fruits of faith, when he saith, We know that the time is come, and that the night being passed, the day is at hand; they which believe not, cannot know these things. Now if thou object and say, what reason or cause is there that he should write these things to the faithful, inasmuch as they know that it is time? &c. Thou must call to mind that in the beginning of the exposition of the text of the Apostle, we have said that the office of preaching is of two sorts, one of teaching, another of exhorting and moving; now a man cannot attain unto that knowledge, that it should not be needful that he is always moved, and kept in a continual and fresh meditation of those things which he hath learned, least the devil, the world and the flesh [which are enemies that never grant truce, neither slack their assault] which do make him weary and slothful, that he may at the last sleep, and become altogether negligent in good things; for the devil, saith Peter, is such an enemy, as goeth about continually like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour: Wherefore he saith, 1 Pet. iv. 7. 'Be ye 'therefore sober, and watch. Paul also will have us do the same thing here for seeing that the devil, the flesh, and the world keep no mean, nor make no end of fighting

againſt us, neither muſt there be any mean kept, or end made of exhorting, provoking, and moving us to watch and work. Hereupon the Holy Ghoſt is called an exhorter, inaſmuch as he inviteth and moveth us unto good; for the ſame cauſe Paul alſo uſeth here choſen words: The works of darkneſs he calleth not armour, but the works of light he calleth armour, not works; undoubtedly that he might ſhew, that there is a fight, that labour and travel is required; and that it cannot be obtained without peril, to watch and live well, foraſmuch as ſo mighty enemies, the devil, the fleſh, and the world do without ceaſing fight againſt us, wherefore Job ſaith, 'The life of man upon earth is a fight and 'temptation.' Now it is not a ſmall matter to ſtand all our life long in the battle, wherefore there is need of very ſhrill trumpets and warlike drums, that is, of earneſt admonitions and exhortations, whereby we may be ſtirred up and encouraged to perſevere valiantly in the fight. Hereupon now it appeareth, why he calleth good works armour or weapons, and calleth not the works of darkneſs ſo, which notwithſtanding, if we conſent unto them, are alſo weapons, Rom. vi 13. 'Neither yield 'ye your members as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs. Again, it is before ſaid, that by light is here ſignified faith, which from the day of the goſpel, by the ſun Chriſt, ſhinneth into our hearts, and enlightneth them, therefore the armour or weapons of light are nothing elſe but the works of this faith; on the contrary, darkneſs is infidelity or unbelief, which is by reaſon of the abſence of the goſpel as of the day, and of Chriſt as of the ſun. This darkneſs the devil doth rule, which cometh from the doctrine of men, and the judgment of man's own reaſon; wherefore the works of darkneſs are the works of infidelity, for as Chriſt is the Lord and governor of the light, which we ſaid to be faith, ſo Paul, Epheſ. vi. calleth Satan the prince of darkneſs, that is, of them which are without faith, and refuſe to be obedient to God, as the ſame Apoſtle witneſſeth, 2 Cor. iv. 3. "If our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: In whom the god of this world (namely, the devil) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious

glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." But what both this armour or weapons of light, and works of darkness are, it is now taught of the Apostle, 'Let us walk honestly as in the day.' No man worketh those things in the day, which he is wont to work in darkness; every one feareth another, and endeavoureth himself to live honestly. It is commonly said, the night is void of shame, which is true, and therefore men do those things in the night, which they would be ashamed to do in the day; but the day is not without shame, and requireth an honest conversation. After the same sort ought a Christian life to be: A Christian ought to commit nothing whereof he may be ashamed, although the whole world should see his works and doings; for he that liveth and worketh so, that he is unwilling that all his works and doings should beseen and heard of all men, and his whole life be manifestly known unto all, liveth a life unworthy of Christ, accordingto that which our Saviour himself saith, John iii. 20. "Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." Hereby it appeareth how necessary it is, that we should be provoked and exhorted to watch, and to put on the armour of light; for what one is there at this day among Christians, which can abide that all his works should be published openly in the night. Now what a Christian life is this, how hypocritically do we live, when as we cannot suffer our life so much as to be disclosed before men, which now is disclosed before God and all his Angels, and in the last day shall be disclosed before all creatures? Wherefore it behoveth a Christian to live so, as he desireth to appear in the last day, and before all. Hereupon Paul saith, 'Walk as the children of light: the 'fruit of the spirit is goodness, and righteousness and truth.' And Rom. xii. 17. 'Provide things honest in the sight of 'all men.' And 2 Cor. i. 12. "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." Howbeit such

such a life shall nothing at all appear, where faith is not, but where a lively, a cheerful and a strong faith is, there such a life cannot be wanting, forasmuch as such a faith is not wearied with well doing, neither sleepeth; wherefore it is no less necessary, to preach to them that have received the doctrine of faith, whereby they may be provoked and stirred up to go on in the good life which they have embraced, and that they suffer not themselves to be overcome by the assaults of the raging flesh, the crafty world, and most subtile Satan. Then it is meet that the doctrine of faith be preached to them that be as yet ignorant of Christ.

'Not in rioting anddrunkenness,and inchamberingand 'wantonness,not instrife and envying.'Here he rehearseth the works of darkness by name, one of which he named also before, to wit, sleep, according to that saying, 1 Thess. v. 6. 'Let us not sleep as do others,but let us 'watch and be sober.' Not that he forbiddeth natural sleep, but spiritual, which is infidelity, whereof those works of the flesh proceed; howbeit, natural sleep also is a work of darkness, if it be used for pleasure, and through immoderate filling of the belly, so that it is a hindrance to the light, that is, faith, and to the armour thereof. Moreover, these six works of darkness which he here rehearseth, do comprehend all the rest; for, Gal. v. and Colos. iii. he reckoneth up more of them, but we will divide those, which he here rehearseth into two sides, the right and the left. On the right side these four fight with the spirit, gluttony, drunkenness, chambering and wantonness; on the left side forasmuch as the left side in the scripture signifieth adversity)those thingswhich proceed from thence do fight,as are wrath, contention and such like, but the right side signifieth prosperity, and those things which ensue thereof, as delights, gluttony, drunkenness, and overmuch sleep, &c. Now it is sufficiently manifest, that Paul under two works of darkness here rehearsed, namely, contention and envying, doth comprehend the rest also of that sort, among which are 'bitterness,and wrath,and anger, 'and clamour, and evil speaking,' Ephes. iv. 31. And those

thoſe which he rehearſeth in the epiſtle to the Galatians. 'Hatred, debate, emulation, ſedition, hereſies, murders, &c.' In fine, hereunto pertaineth whatſoever come of evil anger, either in words or deeds, all which cannot be numbred. After the ſame ſort under thoſe four, gluttony, drunkenneſs, chambering and wantonneſs, he committed all well in words and works, which alſo no man is able to number. And ſo the preſent words of the apoſtle do ſhew, neither needeth it any further declaration, that by theſe ſix works all things are to be underſtood, whereby they that are void of faith, and are yet in darkneſs, do live unpurely as concerning themſelves, and unjuſtly toward their neighbours; whoſe whole life is diſordered and out ofcourſe both toward themſelves and toward others; for there is no man that knoweth not what it is to be gluttoneſs and drunken, that is, either to eat or drink above a meaſure neceſſary for the body; it is well known what it is to ſleep in chambers, and to be wanton, that is, to follow the pleaſure of the body, both with ſleeping above meaſure, and with other leud and unchaſte geſtures and works, which are wont to be committed in chambers of full fed, well tipled, idle and ſlothful bellies, as well in the day, as in the night, as well when they are alone, as in the reſort and company of others. All which things do require even natural darkneſs, and ſecret places, and are ſignified of St. Paul, by chambering and wantonneſs

'But put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.' In theſe words as it were in fine, he ſheweth all the armour of light, when as he exhorteth us, to put on Chriſt. Now Chriſt is put on of us after two ſorts; firſt when we are cloathed with his righteouſneſs, which is done by faith, wherewith he that is endued, believeth that Chriſt for him died, and fulfilled all things. For not ours, but Chriſt's righteouſneſs hath reconciled us to the Father and delivered us from ſins; and ſo to put on Chriſt pertaineth to the doctrine of faith, which teacheth that Chriſt was given unto us, and is unto us inſtead of a pledge. Whereof St. Paul ſpeaketh, Gal. iii. 27. 'For as many of you as have been baptized into

'Chriſt,

Christ have put on Christ." The other manner of putting on Christ is, when we weigh and consider, that he is given unto us, also instead of an example, that we should shew ourselves serviceable, toward our neighbours, being endued with the same virtues, with which we by faith acknowledge that he being adorned, did serve us, that so we may resemble him in all points: and of this manner of putting on Christ St. Paul speaketh here. The same also he willeth us to do, 1 Cor. xv. when he saith, 'And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also 'bear the image of the heavenly.' And Ephes. iv. "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness." Now in Christ we see nothing but the armour of light, no gluttony, no drunkenness but fasting, temperance, keeping under the flesh by divers labours, travelling, preaching, praying, and doing well to all men, in him was no place for slothfulness or superfluous sleep, much less for wantonness; but a marvellous, chastity and purity; he accustomed himself to watch, to rise early, to lye on the ground in the field, having neither house, chamber, nor bed; in him was no wrath, contention, or brawling, but altogether goodness, sweetness, meekness, charity, mercy, patience, &c. Wherefore as St. Paul saith here briefly, 'Put ye on the 'Lord Jesus Christ;' it is as much as that we should set him before us as an example to follow. He teacheth the Colossians the same thing in somewhat more words after this sort: Col. iii. 12. "Put on therefore (as the elect of God holy and beloved) bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness; long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." And Philip after that he had exhorted them to love one another; and that every man should esteem other

better

better than himself, and seek to please, and do for other, he also setteth Christ before them as an example who shewed himself to us our servant, and saith: Phil. ii. 5. "Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man." The sum thereof is this: the armour, or weapons of light are good works, contrary to those works of darkness gluttony, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, contention, and envying, such works are, to fast, to watch, to pray, to labour, to suffer hunger, thirst, cold, heat, to be chaste, to use modesty, temperance, goodness, and that I do not thrust in too many of mine own words, let us hear St. Paul himself rehearsing them in order, Gal. v. 22. 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace 'long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, tem-'perance:' But he rehearseth them farmore at large, 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2 saying, "We beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain; for he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation;' as if he said, Our salvation is nownearer unto us than when we believed, to wit, that it would come to pass, that these days of salvation, in which the gospel is preached abroad to the whole world, should appear. It is time therefore to arise out of sleep, ver. 3, 4, &c. "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering:, by kindness, by the holy Ghost, by love unfeigned; By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live, as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing

poſſeſſing all things." See what a plentiful and verygolden ſtream floweth out of the mouth of St. Paul. Hereof I think we moſt plainly perceive, what is the armour of light, wherewith we muſt be fenced and fortified both on the right hand and on the left. Now this moſt fitly agreeth with the matter, whereas he ſetteth before us a moſt excellent and perfect example, namely, the Lord himſelf, ſaying, 'Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt;' for he is a ſluggiſh beaſt, and not a man, who when he ſeeth his Lord faſt, ſuffer hunger, labour, watch and to be weary, yet giveth himſelf to gluttony, ſleep and pleaſures. What Lord could take theſe things at his ſervants hand, nay, what ſervant durſt preſume to do theſe things. So it cannot be, that a Chriſtian man ſhould not be aſhamed, when he beholdeth Chriſt, and ſeeth himſelf ſo unlike unto him, yea, occupied in quite contrary things. For whom the example of Chriſt himſelf doth not ſtir him up, exhort, and move, who can bring or ſtir up him unto goodneſs? What would the leaves of words do with their ſmall noiſe, if theſe thunderings of the example of Chriſt do not move; and ſurely for this cauſe, St. Paul of purpoſe adjoined this word, Lord, ſaying, 'Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,' as if he ſaid, count it no great nor burthenſome thing, to ſtand and fight in this armour of light, ye that are ſervants, behold your Lord, who when he had no need, did notwithſtanding, ſo well and valiantly uſe this armour, and fought in it for you. 'And make not proviſion for the fleſh, to 'fulfil the luſts thereof.' The apoſtle in theſe few words hath noted two cares of the fleſh; one is natural, whereby neceſſary food and apparel is provided for the body, that it may live, and be able to ſuſtain his labour, leaſt that it be by overmuch abſtinence weakened, and made unprofitable to work; the other care is joined with ſin, when the body is provided for to fulfil the luſts thereof, and that it may be delighted; this care the apoſtle here forbiddeth, for it ingendreth the works of darkneſs, ſo to pamper and make of the fleſh, which is continually to be chaſtiſed, that it may be obedient to the ſpirit, and may not ſhake off the ſitter, like unto an untamed horſe

horſe, altho' that chaſtiſing is ſo to be tempted, that the body notwithſtanding may do his duty, and bear the ſitter. For as the 'fodder, a wand, and burdens, are for 'the aſs; and bread correction, and work for a ſervant,' Eccleſiaſtic. xxxiii. 24. He doth not ſay that thou ſhalt flea or ſlay the aſs, neither that thou ſhalt kill the ſervant, or caſt him into priſon; ſo unto the body the chaſtiſing and labour thereof is due, and neceſſary food is not to be withheld from it, St. Paul himſelf ſaith, 'I 'keep under my body, and bring it unto ſubjection.' He ſaith not, I caſt it into ſickneſs, or I kill it, but I ſubdue it to the ſpirit, that it may ſerve; and be obedient thereunto. Moreover theſe words, 'to fulfil the luſts thereof,' St. Paul added becauſe of two ſorts of men, whereof the firſt under a pretence of natural neceſſity, do ſatisfy their pleaſure, and cover that practice under this falſe pretence. We are ſo prone and ready unto this, that even many of the ſaints have very much complained of this evil, and becauſe of it, have oftentimes above meaſure, afflicted their bodies; for the fleſh is ſo crafty and marvellous ſubtile to prepare delights for itſelf, that no man can ſufficiently take heed of it, yea, it is needful that a man here do never leave to care and fear. The other ſort of men are thoſe blind holy ones, which think that the kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſs thereof conſiſteth in meats and drink, and in choſen apparel, and do beſides their own works regard nothing; when they have ſo faſted, that they have made their head diſeaſed, and their ſtomach diſtempered, and do bring unto their body ſome great infirmity, or ſickneſs, they then think that they have been marvellous holy, and have wrought incomparable good works. But St. Paul ſaith, 'meat 'commendeth us not to God, for neither if we eat are we 'the better: neither if we eat not are we the worſe.' And Coloſ. ii. he writeth thus much in effect: Beware of worſhipping of angels, which have a ſhew of wiſdom, becauſe of humbleneſs and ſuperſtition, whereby they ſpare not the body, while they withdraw from it the meaſure of food due unto it, beſtowing nothing upon it whereby it may be fed. This prepoſterous worſhipping of angels, yea, indeed ſuperſtition, did ſo deceive Gerſon, other-

wise a notable man, that he praised the charter-house monks, for that they did so constantly abstain from flesh, that even when they were sick, they would eat none, although they might preserve themselves even from death thereby. But what if God should judge them as killers of their own body? For there can be none at all either ordinance or order, yea, or vow, contrary to the commandment of God, and if there be any such, surely it ought to be of no force, even as if thou hadst vowed adultery. Now God both here by St. Paul, and elsewhere, hath commanded that necessary provision should be made for the body, and hath forbidden, that we should procure the death of it: wherefore those things that are profitable to preserve it, whether they be flesh, or eggs, or any thing else, must be given unto it, in what day or time soever, whether it be the sixt or first day of the week, whether it be in Lent, or after Easter, in the mean season, whatsoever orders, laws, and vows, yea, even of the Pope being neglected. For it is not lawful for any man, no not for the angels to forbid any thing against the commandment of God. Howbeit, this madness proceedeth from that darkness and blindness, whereby miserable men do regard the work only, and think that they shall obtain salvation through the greatness and multitude of works. But St. Paul willeth, that our fastings and other chastisings of the flesh be the weapons of light, whereby the works of darkness may be overcome, and not the body destroyed; wherefore there ought to be no other use among Christians of fastings, watchings and labours. As it is alone before God whether thou eat fish or flesh; whether thou drink wine or water; whether thou wear red or green garments; all these are the good creatures of God, made unto this end, that we may use them have regard only to this, that thou mayest usethem with a mean andmayst abstain thy self so much from them, as shall suffice to overcome the works of darkness. Wherefore it is impossible, that a common manner of this abstinence should be appointed indifferently to all, for the constitution of all men's bodies is not alike, it is above measure to one, which

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to another is under measure; one hath need of much, another of little, and therefore it is meet that every one have regard of himself, and govern his own body, according to the present doctrine of St. Paul, whereas he saith, 'Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts 'thereof,' that is, obey the wisdom thereof so far that ye deny not the necessary things which it requireth, but grant it not those things, which it requireth to the fulfilling of the lusts thereof, more than necessity to pleasure only. If a better rule of moderation could have been given beside this, St. Paul would not have concealed it.

Hereby thou seest, that the popish ordinances, which forbid the eating of flesh and certain meats, are quite contrary to the gospel; which St. Paul hath plainly foretold, 1 Tim. iv. 1. "Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience sear'd with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving." No man surely can deny that these words do briefly reprove the orders of Monks, and scrificing priests, so clear and manifest are both these words, and also their preposterous religion. Moreover thou seest here also, godly reader, that St. Paul doth not teach that dotage and womanly holiness of certain, which choose unto themselves certain days, wherein to fast to certain saints, one to this, another to that, all which are blind proceedings, and builded upon their own works. True religion is without choice of meats and days, all the life long to use modesty and sobriety. For seeing that these must be the armour of light, and that it is requisite that our life be undefiled and chaste, it behoveth us surely never to put off this armour, but we must be found always sober, temperate, watching, labouring and praying. But those doting holy ones, one day eat nothing but bread and water, and afterward three whole months they daily be drunken and eat excessively, even until they be not well in their wits. Others fast so that at the evening they eat no meat, but in the mean time, they make themselves drunk with drinking: Who is able to rehearse

all their dotages, and all their works of darkneſs; all which proceed from hence, for that fooliſh men conſider and regard the work, and not uſe the uſe of the work, they make their armour of glaſs, they are altogether ignorant whereunto it is profitable to faſt and abſtain; they are like unto him which carried a ſword unto the end, that he might look upon it and knew not how to uſe it, when he was beaten. Theſe things may ſuffice to have been ſpoken for the expoſition of this text.

SERMON XIX.

Wherein is taught how the faithful ought to rejoice in God, and let their patient Mind be known unto Men.

(Phil. iv. 4. to the 7.) *Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I ſay, Rejoice,* &c.

THIS text indeed is but ſhort, nevertheleſs it doth moſt plentifully abound with right Chriſtian doctine, inſtructing firſt how we ought to behave ourſelves toward God, ſecondly, how toward our neighbours, ſaying, firſt, 'Rejoice in the Lord alway.' This joy is a fruit of faith, moſt certainly following it, as St. Paul witneſſeth, Gal. v. 22. where he ſaith: 'But the fruit of the 'Spirit is love, joy, peace, long ſuffering, gentleneſs, good-'neſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance: againſt ſuch there is no 'law.' Neither can it be, that that heart ſhould rejoice in the Lord, which hath not yet believed in him. Whereupon it cometh to paſs, that where no faith is, there can be nothing but fear, trembling, horror, and ſadneſs, as often as ſuch either remember God, or hear him named, yea, hatred and enmity of God remaineth in ſuch hearts, the cauſe whereof is, for that the heart void of faith, findeth itſelf defiled with ſins, whereby it doubted not but that it hath deſerved the vengeance of God, that ſins cannot be but hated of God, which is juſt, and ſo when it doth not believe that God will be merciful and favourable unto it, how can it not but de-

teſt all memory of him? ſo far is it off that it can rejoice in the Lord, the revenger of ſins. Theſe two things, the knowledge of ſin, and the vengeance of God prepared for ſins are in the heart of the unbeliever, which heart as it is unbelieving, ſo hath it no hope of pardon, and therefore what other thing can theſe things work in it, but cauſe it to be troubled, caſt down, always fearful, and greatly terrified, and to think that the vengeance of God doth every moment hang over it, that ſo that may be verified, which Solomon ſaith: 'The ungodly fleeth when no man purſueth him.' And that which is ſaid, Deut. xxviii. 65. 'The Lord ſhall give thee a trembling 'heart, and thy life ſhall hang in doubt before thee.' If a man will much perſuade ſuch a heart, to have joy in the Lord, he ſhall do even as if he perſuaded the water that it ſhould burn like unto the fire, for it can taſte none of this joy, it always feeleth in conſcience, that the revenging hand of God, is heavy upon it. Whereupon the prophet ſaith, Pſal. xxxii. 11. 'Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and ſhout for joy, all ye that are upright 'in heart.' For this joy in the Lord cannot be but in the righteous and them that are upright in heart; and therefore it is manifeſt, that this part of ſcripture was written not for ſinners, but to the righteous and ſaints. Sinners muſt firſt be ſhewed, how they may be delivered from ſins, and may obtain God to be favourable unto them, which when they have learned and ſo obtained, it followeth, that they do of their own accord rejoice in the Lord, being delivered from remorſe of conſcience. But if any demand, how one may be delivered from remorſe of conſcience, and have God merciful unto him, that is declared before at large, and ſhall be hereafter copiouſly ſpoken of. He which ſeeketh to have a free and glad conſcience, and God gentle and favourable, let him not begin at his own works, as the deceitful Papiſts teach, only tormenting conſciences, and increaſing the wrath of God, but let him deſpair of himſelf and of all his own works, let him embrace God in Chriſt, having a ſure faith the goſpel, that he ſhall receive whatſoever it promiſeth. But the goſpel promiſeth that

Christ is given unto us, that he may take away our sins and be our High Priest, Mediator, and Advocate before God, that so we may nothing doubt, but that our sins through Christ only, and his works are forgiven us, and that we are reconciled to God, and that by this means our conscience is delivered and comforted.

When such a faith possesseth the heart, and the gospel is so received indeed, then God appeareth sweet and altogether loving, neither feeleth the heart any thing but the favour and grace of God, it standeth with a strong and bold confidence, it feareth not least any evil come unto it, it being quiet from all fear of vengeance and displeasure, is merry and glad of so incomparable grace and goodness of God given unto it freely and most abundantly in Christ. Wherefore there must needs forthwith proceed from such a love, faith, joy, peace, gladness, giving of thanks, praise, and a certain marvellous delight in God, as in a most dear and favourable father, which dealeth so fatherly with us, and poureth forth his gifts so plentifully and in so great a measure, upon them that do not deserve them. Behold of such joy, St. Paul speaketh here, which truly where it is, there can be no place for sin, or fear of death or hell, yea, nothing is there, but a joyful, quiet, and omnipotent trust in God, and in his favour. Wherefore it is called joy in the Lord, not in gold or silver, gluttony or drunkenness, delicates or singing, health, knowledge, wisdom, power, glory, friendship, favour, no nor in good works, holiness, or whatsoever is without God. Of these thou shalt take but a deceitful and vain joy, which cannot pierce the heart, or enter unto the bottom thereof, whereof thou mayest rightly say that which is wont to be spoken as a proverb among the Germans; This man rejoiceth, but he feeleth not any joy in his heart. There is one full and perfect joy, which the believers take of and in the Lord, which is nothing else, than to commit themselves unto him, and of him alone to rejoice trust and presume, as a most favourable and loving father. Whatsoever joy is not after this sort, the

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Lord doth contemn and reject it, whereof Jeremiah speaketh, ix. 23. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me." And St. Paul saith, 'Let him that rejoiceth rejoice in the 'Lord.' He addeth, that we must rejoice always, where he toucheth them, which only half the time do rejoice in the Lord, and praise him; that is, when all things fall out according to their desire, but when adversity cometh, they change joy with sadness and sorrow, of whom the 48th Psalm speaketh, 'So long as thou dost well 'unto him he will speak good of thee.' But the prophet himself saith, not so: 'I will bless the Lord at all 'times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth,' Psal. xxxiv. 1. And he hath just cause so to do, for who shall hurt him, unto whom God is merciful; surely sin shall not hurt him, neither death nor hell; wherefore the prophet saith in another place: 'Yea tho' I walk 'thro' the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no 'evil,' Psal. xxiii, 4. and Paul saith, Rom. viii. 35. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Again I say rejoice." This repetition of the apostle confirmeth his exhortation, and truly not without a cause, forasmuch as we live in the midst of sins, and therefore in the midst of tribulation, both which do move us unto sadness and heaviness. Wherefore the apostle purposing to comfort us against these, exhorteth us that we should always rejoice in the Lord, altho' we sometimes fall into sins. For it is meet, the more God with his goodness exceedeth the evil of sin; so much more always to rejoice in him, when we are sorrowful because of our sins, which altho' by nature they bring sadness and sorrow with them, yet forasmuch as they cannot bring so much hurt, as Christ, if we believe in him bringeth profit and safety, joy in the Lord

ought always to have the first place with us, and far to overcome the sorrow and sadness that cometh by reason of our sins; for we must always think on that which John writeth; 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with 'the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the pro-'pitiation for our sins, 1 John ii. 1. Let your moderation 'be known unto all men.' He hath already taught, how men ought to behave themselves toward God, namely, that they must serve him with a cheerful heart and continual joy; now he declareth in few words, how the believers ought to behave themselves toward men, saying, 'Let your moderation be known unto all men.' Which words are thus much in effect; Be joyful toward God, always rejoicing in and of him, but toward men be of a patient mind, and pliant, applying yourselves to all, and so behaving yourselves, that ye be ready to do and suffer all things, and to yield in every thing, as much as may be by any means without transgressing the commandment of God, whereby ye may approve yourselves to all men, and please all in that which is good; not only hurting none, but also taking in good worth all things of all men, interpreting aright the sayings of all men, and accepting them in the better part, that men may plainly see you to be them, unto whom all things are alike, which take in good part whatsoever betideth you, which stick in nothing, which would not disagree with any man for any cause, which be rich with the rich, poor with the poor, rejoicing with them that rejoice, weeping with them that weep, and to be brief, be made all things to all men, that all men must needs acknowledge that ye are grievous to none, but agreeable, of a patient mind, pliant, and obedient toward all in all things. The Greek word *epieices* which the apostle here useth, meaneth the same, which signifieth in our tongue a patient and pliant mind, whereby one doth so apply and shew himself indifferent to others, that he is the same to one that he is to another, applying himself indifferently to the will of all, not requiring himself to be counted for a rule, whereunto the rest ought to apply and order themselves. An old interpreter translateth it modesty, which, if thou understand it aright, and not

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for the only moderation and temperance of meat and apparel, as it is want commonly to be taken, is not altogether unfitly translated, namely, if thou understand it to be a virtue; whereby one thinking modestly of himself, endeavoureth to order and apply himself unto all, according to the capacity and ability of every one, ready to permit, to take in good part, to obey, to give place, to do, to omit, to suffer all things, as he shall see it will profit his neighbour, altho' he must suffer hindrance and loss of his substance, name, and body thereby. That these things may be made more plain, it shall be good to declare them by examples, St. Paul 1 Cor. ix. 20. writteth thus of himself: "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ; that I might gain them that are without law." Behold, thou seest here the patient and pliant mind rightly observing those things which are here commanded. For those things that he writeth of himself have this meaning; sometimes he did eat, drink and do all things as a Jew, altho' it was not necessary, that he should so do; sometimes he did eat and drink with the Gentles, and did all things as free from the law; for only faith in God, and love toward our neighbour, are necessarily required, all other things are free, so that we may freely observe them for one man's sake, and omit them for another man's sake, as we shall perceive it to be profitable to every one. Now it is contrary to this modesty or meekness, if one having an impatient mind, trusteth to his own wit, and contendeth that one thing among the rest is necessary, which thou must neither omit or observe, and so applying himself unto none, but contending to have all others to apply themselves unto him, he neglecteth and perverteth the softness and meekness which is here taught, yea, and the liberty of faith also; such some of the Jews were, unto whom we must give no place, even as St. Paul yielded unto them. We see the same example commonly in Christ, but especially Mat. xii. and Mat. ii. where were

read that he suffered his disciples to break the sabbath, and he himself also, when the case so required, did break it; when it was otherwise, he did keep it, whereof he gave this reason, 'The Son of man is Lord even of 'the sabbath.' Which is as much to say as the sabbath is free, that thou mayest break it for one man's sake and advantage, and for the sake and advantage of another thou mayest keep it; so Paul caused Timothy to be circumcised because of the Jews, for that they thought that it was of importance to their salvation; again he would not have Titus circumcised, because certain Jews did unjustly urge it, so that the circumcision of Titus would have been rather a confirmation of error unto them, than have profited them any thing. Paul therefore would keep circumcision free, that he might sometime use it, and sometimes not use it, as he should perceive it to be profitable to every one.

So, to come to other matters, when the Pope commandeth to make confession, to fast, to abstain from, or use this or that kind of meat, &c. and exacteth these things as necessary to salvation, they are utterly to be contemned, and those things that are contrary to these, are most freely to be done; but if he should not command them as necessary, if any man might be helped or edified in any thing by the observation of them; surely they were to be observed, but freely and of love only, as also they are to be omitted, if the omitting of them may be profitable to any. The reason of this liberty is this. The Son of man is Lord of the sabbath; if of the sabbath, how much more of the traditions of men? Whatsoever thou shalt observe upon this liberty, it cannot hurt any, but to observe them of necessity, it extinguisheth faith and the gospel; likewise if one live, yet as in a monastery, if he observe the vows and ordinances of that life upon Christian liberty, and of love to his brethren that he may edify them, and of no necessity, neither with the hindrance of his own or other men's salvation, he shall do godly for he is free; but if those things he straightly required as necessary to salvation, then before thou suffer thyself to be brought into this error, monasteries, shavings, hoods, vows,

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rules, ordinances, and all such like must be left, and the contrary must be done, to witness, that only faith and love are necessary for a Christian, and that all other things are free, so that he may either omit or do them for the edifying and cause of them with whom he liveth. Whatsoever thou shalt observe upon liberty and love, is godly; but if thou observe any thing of necessity, it is ungodly. The same is to be said, of all other ordinances and decrees of men, which are wont to be observed in monasteries, that whatsoever doth not agree with the word of God, thou mayest being free either observe or omit it, according as thou shalt know it to be profitable and acceptable to them, with whom thou art conversant; but if they be required as necessary, reject them all utterly, and tread them under thy feet. Hereupon thou now seest what a devilish thing the papacy and monasteries be; for whatsoever things be free and to be permitted to free love only, they make them necessary, and say the keeping of them is of importance to salvation, whereby truly as much as is in them they together pervert and extinguish the gospel and faith. I pass over with silence, that they hereupon set and sell the care of the belly instead of the service of God; for how many among them at this day do for God's cause, and not rather for their belly's sake, take upon them to be monks or clerks do frequent the choir, sing, pray, say mass, or do any such thing, wherein they counterfeit and corrupt the true worship and service of God? The common subversion of all monasteries were the best reformation of all these things, from which so much disadvantage, and no whit of profit, may be looked for. Before our monastery could be persuaded concerning true Christian liberty, infinite thousands of soulsin others should perish; wherefore forasmuch as they bring no advantage at all, neither is there any need of them, and they are a cause of greater hindrance to a Christian common wealth, than can be thought, and cannot by any means be reformed, what can be more profitable, than that they be utterly overthrown and abolished? Moreover, that we may admonish here concerning the

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civil magiſtrate, when he commandeth or requireth any thing, yea, if he compel thereunto we muſt obey, for there cometh no loſs of Chriſtian liberty or of faith hereby, foraſmuch as they do not contend that thoſe things are neceſſary to ſalvation which they do ordain or require, but only to maintain outward rule, public tranquility and government, and ſo the conſcience remaineth free. Wherefore, foraſmuch as it doth nothing hinder faith to do thoſe things which the civil magiſtrate commandeth, but doth alſo profit the common weal, it ſhall be without doubt a point of Chriſtian obedience to endeavour to do them with a willing mind, that we may be ſuch as are pliant and agreeable to all men, willing to do all things, ready to obſerve well of every one, and to gratify all. Howbeit if any ſhould contend that thoſe commandments of the civil magiſtrate be neceſſary to ſalva tion, then, as it is ſaid of the traditions of the Papiſts, the contrary rather were to be done, or at the leaſt it were to be witneſſed, that thou doſt them only for the common weal's ſake, becauſe it is profitable to others, and not that thou mayeſt obtain ſalvation by them; which we have gotten by Chriſt Jeſus alone, as many of us as believe in him. According to this doctrine and the example before-mentioned every one ought to behave himſelf in every thing and toward all men, as Paul here teacheth, that he ſtick not to his own judgment or right, and that he ſhew himſelf pliant to others, and have regard of thoſe things, which he ſhall know will be acceptable and profitable to his neighbours. When therefore it doth nothing hinder thy faith, and profiteth thy neighbour to yield ſomewhat of thy own right if thou do it not, thou are without charity, and neglecteſt that Chriſtian ſoftneſs and patient mind that Paul here ſpeaketh of; yea, if thou haſt regard hereof, as he that truly believeth in Chriſt ought to have, thou, muſt take it patiently even when any man doth injury unto thee, or endamage thee; and ſo interpret it in the better part, and always think on that which that martyr when all his ſubſtance was taken from him, ſaid, 'But 'they ſhall not take away Chriſt from me.' So whatſoever chanceth unto thee, ſay thou, I have as yet ſuffered no

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loſs of my faith, why ſhould I not take it in good part, which my neighbour hath done? Why ſhould I not yield unto him, and apply myſelf to his will? Thou canſt ſcarce find a more manifeſt example hereof, than between two unfeigned friends, for as they behave themſelves one toward another, ſo ought a Chriſtian to behave himſelf toward every one Either of them endeavoureth to gratify other, either of them giveth place to other, ſuffereth, doth, and omitteth whatſoever he ſeeth to be for the profit and advantage of the other, and that freely without all conſtraint. Either of them doth diligently apply himſelf to the will of the other, neither of them compelleth other to follow his mind, and if one ſhould uſe the goods of another, the other would not be offended, but would take it in good part, and would not grudge rather to give more, and that I may ſpeak briefly, between ſuch there is no exaction of law, no grudging, no conſtraint, no neceſſity, but liberty, favour, and good will. On the contrary, ſuch as are impatient and obſtinate, which take nothing in good part of any man, but go about to make all things ſubject to their own will, and to order all things according to their own judgment, ſuch I ſay trouble the world, and are the cauſe of all diſcords, contentions, wars, and whatſoever difference there is, and ſay afterward, that they did thoſe things for the love of juſtice, that they endeavoured to defend that which is right: So that that heathen man ſaid not amiſs, *Extreme rigour is extreme injury*. And Solomon alſo ſaith; Eccleſ. vii. 16. 'Be not 'righteous overmuch, neither make thyſelf overwiſe;' for as extreme rigour is extreme injury, ſo too great wiſdom is extreme folly; which alſo is meant by this common ſaying, When wiſe men dote they dote beyond meaſure, Surely if God ſhould deal with us according to right, we ſhould periſh in a moment; wherefore, as Paul praiſeth in him this moderation of right, and incomparable patience and gentleneſs, ſaying. 2 Cor. x. 1. 'I Paul my-'ſelf beſeech you, by the meekneſs and gentleneſs of Chriſt,' ſo it is alſo meet that we do obſerve a meaſure of our judgment, right, wiſdom, prudence, and in all things

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apply ourselves to the profit of others. But let us weigh the words of the Apostle, for they are placed not without a spiritual skilfulness; he saith, 'Let your moderation 'be known unto all men.' Where thou must not think that he commandeth thee to be made known unto all men, or that thou oughtest to tell thymoderation before all men; for he saith not, tell it forth, but let itbeknown, that is, endeavour to practise it toward men; I do not command that ye should think or speak of it, but that ye labour that it may be known indeed; while all men do try and feel it, that no man may say any other thing of you, than that ye be of a patient mind, and pliant, and applying yourselves to all men, being enforced so to say even by manifest experience. So that if any man were never so much bent to speak otherwise of you, his mouth might be stopped by the testimony of all other, witnessing of your patient mind and meekness; so saith Christ, Mat. v. 16. 'Let your light so shine beforemen, 'that theymay seeyourgoodworks, andglorifyyourFather 'which is in heaven.' And Peter saith, 1 Pet. ii. 12. "Having your conversation honest among the Gentles: that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good workswhich they shall behold, glorifyingGod in the day of visitation." It is not surely in our power, that our moderationshould beknown and acknowledged of all men, but it shall be sufficient for us, if we endeavour that all men may have trial thereof in us, and that no man may find it wanting in our life. Moreover [all men] is not so to be taken, thou shouldest understand thereby all menwhich are in the world, but rather all sortsofmen that we have regard to be of a patient mind, as well toward enemies as friends, as well toward servants as masters, small as great, poor as rich, strangers as them at home, toward them that we know not, as toward them with whom we are familiar; for there are some which behave themselves very gently and patiently toward strangers, but toward them that are in the house with them, or with whom they always keep company, there are none more obstinate or froward than they. And how many are there, which at great and rich men's hands take all things in good part, interpreting every thing

thing at the beſt, and moſt gently bear whatſoever they ſay or do, but toward the poor they ſhew no gentleneſs or meekneſs, neither take any things of them in good part; ſo we are all ready to do for our children, parents, friends and kinſmen, and moſt favourably interpret and willingly bear whatſoever they have committed. How often dowe even praiſe the manifeſt vices of our friends, or at leaſt wink at them, and apply ourſelves moſt fitly unto them? But to our enemies and adverſaries we impart none of this favour; in themwe can find nothing that is good, nothing that is to be born, nothing that can be interpreted in the better part, but we diſpraiſe every thing and take it at the worſt. Againſt ſuch imperfect patient minds Paul here ſpeaketh, ſaying, 'Let your moderation be made known unto all men;' he will have our patient mind, and right Chriſtian meekneſs, to be perfect and entire toward all, whether they be enemies or friends; he will have us ſuffer and take in good part all things of all men, without all reſpect either of perſons or deſerts. And ſuch without doubt will our patient mind be, if it be true and not counterfeit; no otherwiſe than gold remaineth gold, whether a godly or ungodly man poſſeſs it; and the ſilver, which Judas who betrayed the Lord had, was not turned into aſhes, but remained that which it was, as truly all the good creatures of God, whoſoever have them; do continue toward all things that which they are: So a patient mind which is ſincere, coming of the ſpirit, continueth like itſelf whether it light upon enemies or friends, poor men or rich. But our nature, which is full of deceit and plainly corrupt, doth ſo behave itſelf, as if that which is gold in the hand of Peter, were turned into a coal in the hand of Judas, and it is wont to be patient and pliant toward rich men, great perſonages, ſtrangers, friends, and not toward every one, wherefore it is falſe, vain vile, hypocritical; and nothing but deceit and mokery before God. Hereof now learn how far from being ſound and entire, ſpiritual meekneſs and a patient mind is unto nature, and how few there bewhich mark this evil, by reaſon of that deceitful meekneſs and patient mind, though in outward ſhew very goodly,

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which they ſhew unto ſome, thinking that they do well and juſtly, in that they are more hard and impatient toward others; for ſo their defiled and filthy nature teacheth them, by her goodly reaſon, which always judgeth, and doth againſt the ſpirit and thoſe things that are of the ſpirit, becauſe, as Paul ſaith, Rom. viii. 5. 'They that are after the fleſh, do mind the things of the fleſh.' But to conclude, it is manifeſt that the Apoſtle hath comprehended in theſe few words the whole life worthy of a Chriſtian, which he ought to lead toward his neighbour; for he that is of a patient mind, pliant and meek indeed, ſtudieth to deſerve well of all men, as well concerning the body as concerning the ſoul, as well in deed as in words, and doth alſo bear with a patient mind, the offences and malice of others. Where ſuch a mind is, there is alſo 'love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering 'gentleneſs, goodneſs,' and whatſoever is the fruit of the ſpirit, Gal. v 22. But here fleſh murmureth: If we ſhould endeavour to be ſo meek and patient, ſaith the fleſh, that we ſhould take all things in good part of all men, it would come to paſs, that no man ſhould be able to keep a piece of bread ſafely and in peace, for the unjuſt which would abuſe our meekneſs and patient mind, they would take away all things, yea, they would not ſuffer us to live. Mark how comfortably and abundantly the Apoſtle doth ſatisfy this diſtruſting and fooliſh thinking even from this place unto the end of this text, 'The 'Lord is at hand; as though he ſaid, If there were no Lord or no God, one might fear, when by his meekneſs and patient mind he counteth all things alike, and taketh all things in good part, that that would be damage and hurt unto him; but now there not only is a Lord, which governeth all things moſt juſtly, but he is alſo at hand, he cannot forget or forſake thee, be thou only of a patient mind and gentle toward all, let him have the care of thee, nouriſh, and preſerve thee. He hath given Chriſt the eternal good, how ſhould not he alſo give things neceſſary for the belly? He hath far more than can be taken away from thee, and thou foraſmuch as thou haſt Chriſt, haſt much more than the whole world; here-

hereunto pertaineth that which is said, Psal. lv. 22. 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. And 1 Pet. v. 7. 'Casting all your care upon him, for he 'careth for you. And Christ saith, Mat. vi. 26. 'Behold 'the fowls of the air, consider the lilies of the field, &c.' All which agree with the present consolation of the Apostle, and have the same meaning which these words here have: 'The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing.' That is, take no care at all for yourselves, let God care for you, who knoweth and is able to do it, whom ye have now known that he is good and gracious. The heathen have not without a cause care of this present life, inasmuch as they are ignorant, and do not believe that they have a God who hath care of all, as Christ Mat. vi. 31. said, "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Wherefore let the whole world take from thee, and do thee injury, thou shalt always have sufficient, and it cannot be that thou shouldest perish with any adversity, unless they have first taken from thee thy God; but who can take him from thee, if thou thyself dost not cast him off? There is no cause therefore that we should be careful seeing that he is our Father and provideth for us, which hath all things in his own hand, even those which seem to take away those things that be ours from us, and to endamage and hurt us wherein soever they are able. But we have exceeding great cause always to rejoice in the Lord, when we are of a patient mind toward all men, forasmuch as we are certain, if so be that we believe, that it can by no means come to pass, that good things should be wanting unto us, having Almighty God our favourable and careful Father; whom, they that have not, let us suffer them to be troubled with care. It ought to be our only care, how we may be void of care, and be found always joyful in God; and meek, and of a patient mind toward men: So without doubt we shall try that which David tried, Psal. xxxvii. 25. saying, "I have been young and now am old: yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his

seed

ſeed begging bread;" and that which he ſaith, Pſal. xl. 'The Lord careth for me. But in every thing by prayer 'and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, let your requeſts 'bemade known unto God. In theſe words the Apoſtle teacheth, how our care is to be caſt upon God, and the meaning of that which he ſaith is this, Only be not careful, but if any thing chance which may make you careful (as indeed innumerable ſuch are wont to come unto thoſe that live in the world) ſo behave yourſelves, that ye attempt nothing at all with your care, whatſoever that ſhall be which chanceth unto you, but caſting off care, turn yourſelves with prayer and ſupplication into God, and deſire him that he will bring to paſs and finiſh that which yourſelves otherwiſe ſhould in vain have attempted with your care to accompliſh. Howbeit deſire this with giving of thanks, foraſmuch as ye have ſuch a God as hath care of you, and unto whom ye may ſafely commit all care for you; but he that will not ſo behave himſelf when any thing happeneth, but will firſt weigh all things by his own reaſon, and order them according to his own judgment, and ſo take to himſelf the care of his things, he ſhall wrap himſelf in innumerable diſadvantages, he ſhall loſe all joy and quietneſs thereby, and yet ſhall prevail nothing but labour in vain, and plunge himſelf ſo much more in troubles and miſeries, that he ſhall not be able to eſcape out of them again, which we learn daily both by our own and by other men's experience. Now that which Paul here admoniſheth concerning prayer tendeth unto this end, leſt that any man ſhould neglect all things and commit them to God, and he himſelf ſleep and do nothing at all, no not ſo much as once pray for them; for he that ſhould uſe this ſlothfulneſs, altho' he were now quiet, ſhall eaſily be wrapped in cares, whereof he ſhall not be able to rid himſelf; we muſt do our endeavour and not ſleep, and therefore it is that many things be incident, which are wont to bring carefulneſs, whereby we might be as it were compelled to pray unto God. Wherefore Paul hath not in vain joined together thoſe two: "Be careful for nothing: but, In every thing by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, let your requeſts be made known

known unto God.' Nothing and every thing do indeed greatly differ, howbeit the Apostle therefore put them together, that he might signify that it cannot be but that many and innumberable things be incident, which are wont to bring care, but that in all them we ought to admit no carefulness, but always fly unto prayer, and commit them all unto God and desire of him those things whereof we have need. Now we must here see how our prayer must be framed, and what is the true manner of praying. The Apostle setteth down four quests or petitions. Prayer is those words or speech, wherein as sometimes something is desired, so also other things are declared, as is the the Lord's prayer and the Psalms. Supplication is when the petition is urged or made more earnest by something, as when one prayeth for his father, or for some other thing which is dear and excellent unto him, as when we pray unto God by his mercy, by his Son, by his promise, by his name, &c. As Solomon, Psal. cxxxii 1. 'Lord, remember David, and 'all his afflictions. And Paul, Rom. xii. 1. I beseech you 'therefore brethren by the mercies of God.' And 2 Cor. x. 1. 'I Paul myself beseech you. by the meekness and 'gentleness of Christ,' &c. A petition or request is, when we name that which is desired, and for which prayer and supplication is made, as in the Lord's prayer, all that composition of words is called prayer, but those seven things for which we pray, as hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, &c. are petitions, according to that saying, Mat. vii. 7. "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Giving of thanks is when the benefits of God are rehearsed, whereby faith in God is strengthned, and stirred up so much more confidently to look for that which is desired, and for which we do pray; wherefore prayer urgeth or earnestly asketh by supplication, but is strengthened and made sweet and acceptable by giving of thanks, and so by this strength and sweetness it prevaileth, and obtaineth whatsoever it asketh. This manner of prayer we read to have been used in the church, and among the

holy fathers of the old Teſtament, which were wont always in their prayers to aſk with ſupplication and giving of thanks; the ſame alſo we ſee in the Lord's prayer, which beginneth with giving of thanks and with praiſe, when as even in the beginning thereof we confeſs God a father, unto whom the godly mind hath acceſs by his fatherly love, and by the love of his ſon, unto which ſupplication nothing maybe compared; wherefore it is both the beſt and moſt excellent prayer of all which may be had. Moreover in theſe words Paul hath very well expreſſed the myſtery of the golden cenſure in the old Teſtament, whereof we read many things in the books of Moſes; it was lawful for the prieſts only to burn incenſe, now all we which believe in Chriſt are prieſts, wherefore it is lawful for us all, and for us only to burn the incenſe of prayers. The cenſer that golden veſſel, is the words which we utter in prayer, ſurely golden and precious, as thoſe are whereof the Lord's prayer conſiſteth, the Pſalms, and other prayers of the ſcripture; for commonly in the ſcripture veſſels ſignify words, for that our meanings are contained in words as in a veſſel, and by words are uttered and received as out of a veſſel, as wine, water, burning coals, and ſuch like, are contained in veſſels, and taken out of veſſels; ſo by the cup of Babylon, Apoc. 17. the doctrine of men is underſtood, and by the cup wherein the blood of Chriſt is drunk, the goſpel. Furthermore burning coals, whereupon the frankincenſe was laid, ſignify giving of thanks, and rehearſing of benefits in prayer, which we are wont to do in making ſupplication; for, that by fiery coals benefits are ſignified, it is manifeſt even out of the 12th to the Rom. where the Apoſtle reciteth the ſaying of Solomon, Prov. xxv. 21. 'If thine enemybe hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirſty, give him water to drink: for thou ſhalt heap coals of fire upon his head.' And benefits may be rightly called coals of fire, foraſmuch as they inflame the heart with love, although it be cold. In the law it was prohibited to lay the frankincenſe upon any other coals, but them that were of the altar of the Lord, which ſignifieth that we muſt not rehearſe our own good deeds in prayer, as that

Phariſee

Phariſee did, Luke xv. but only the benefits of God beſtowed upon us in Chriſt. He is our altar, by him we muſt offer, for the benefits received by him we muſt give thanks, and make mention of them in prayer for the increaſing of our faith. This St. Paul teacheth, Coloſ. iii. 17. where he ſaith, 'Do all in the name of the Lord 'Jeſus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him.' For God cannot ſuffer, that thou ſhouldeſt glory in any thing elſe in his ſight, which he declared in type or figure, Levit. x. where we read that Nadab and Abhiu the ſons of Aaron were taken and conſumed of the flame from the Altar of God, becauſe they burned incenſe, taking other fire than of the altar of the Lord. The works of Chriſt only are acceptable to God, wherefore for theſe only we muſt both give thanks and rejoice in prayer. The incenſe ſignifieth the Petitions made in prayer; for petitions are, whereof prayer conſiſteth, and which aſcend unto God, according as St. Paul ſaith, 'Let your requeſts be made known unto God,' wherein he ſeemeth to have conſidered and interpreted them as a ſavour aſcending from the cenſer. As though he had ſaid, when ye ſhall burn incenſe ſweet and acceptable unto the Lord, make, that your petitions be ſhewed unto God with ſupplication and giving of thanks, this incenſe and this ſavour as it is moſt ſweet unto God, ſo doth it aſcend ſtraight unto heaven like vapours of ſmoak, and entereth even unto the throne of God; and as burning coals do give a ſtrong ſavour, and make it aſcend upward; ſo the memory of the benefits of God, which we rehearſe by giving of thanks, and whereof we do as it were advertiſe God and ourſelves both, make prayer ſtedfaſt and bold, which cheerfully and gladly aſcendeth into heaven, without which, truly prayer fainteth, is cold and of no force. Wherefore whoſoever thou art, before thou pray with faith and effectually, thy heart muſt be inflamed with the memory of the benefits, which God hath beſtowed upon us in Chriſt. But perhaps ſome men will demand how our petitions are made known or become manifeſt unto God, ſeeing then they are not only known unto him before we pray, but he alſo doth ſend us that,

which we ask? Whereunto I answer; the apostle adjoined this, that he might teach, of what sort true prayer ought to be, viz. assured and having confidence and trust in God, which passeth not away into the wind, neither is made at adventure, as their prayer is, which pray, and have no regard whether God hear or not, yea, rather believe, that he doth not hear, which undoubtedly is not to pray or to ask of God, but to tempt and mock God. For if any man did desire money of me, whom I certainly knew, not to persuade himself that he should receive it, I could not suffer such an asker, of whom I might assure myself to be mocked; how much more is God offended at our much crying out and babbling, when we do continually babble much, and cry out, and doth not think at all whether he heareth us. Learn therefore here, that thy petitions must be shewed unto God, that is that thou must so ask, that thou doubt not, that thy petitions be known and accepted of God, and believe certainly that thou shalt obtain whatsoever thou dost ask, with which faith if thou be endued, it shall so come unto thee indeed. For as we believe, so it cometh unto us. Wherefore, as the smoak carrieth savour upward from the censer; so faith carrieth the petitions of the believers into the sight of God, whereby we assuredly believe that our petitions shall come unto God, and that we shall undoubtedly obtain those things that we ask. St. Paul by these words (be made known) did undoubtedly mean that which is often in the Psalms; 'God hath heard my petition, Give ear Lord 'unto my prayer,' and such like. Hereof Christ speaketh, Mat. xxi. 22. and Mark xi. 24. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask 'in prayer believing ye shall receive. And James saith, chap. 'i. Ask in faith and waver not, for he that wavereth shall 'receive nothing of the Lord.' Who may not now hereof perceive, that that much babbling, and crying out which is made commonly through the world in monasteries, is a mocking and deluded of God? The prayers of these, if they may be called prayers, are abundantly shewed before mea, for they cry out and babble too much, but there is no regard of them with God,

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they are not known of him, neither come they unto his ears, that is, he doth by no means hear them, for that they do not believe, or are assured, that their crying out or much babbling is heard of God, wherefore as they believe, so do they receive. It was time therefore long since, that those mocking and blasphemies of God should be abolished. But if we pray as we are here taught, there shall be nothing surely which we may not obtain. Now we pray for many things continually, and receive nothing, neither is it any marvel, seeing we pray so, that our petitions be not shewed unto God, for that we do not believe that they be manifest unto him. Wo to our diffidence and incredulity. 'And the peace of God which 'passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds 'through Christ Jesus.' In how godly an order doth St. Paul here instruct a Christian man? First he teacheth him to be glad and joyful in the Lord by faith; secondly, to shew himself meek and gentle to all his neighbours. And if thou say, how can I do that without loss or hindrance? he answereth the Lord is at hand. If thou again object; but what if men persecute me, and even bereave me of that I have? He addeth; 'Be 'careful for nothing, but let thy requests be made known 'unto God.' Where if the flesh again murmur, what if in the mean season I be oppressed and spoiled? he concludeth that there shall be nothing less, the peace of God shall preserve and keep thee; whereof I must now treat somewhat; by the peace of God is not meant here that peace whereby God is peaceable and quiet in himself, but that which he giveth unto us, and poureth into our hearts, even as also it is called the word of God which he giveth us, that we may preach it and believe it. So when he giveth this peace unto us, it is called the peace of God, even because we have the same with him, when in the world notwithstanding we suffer affliction. Now this peace passeth all understanding, reason, and knowledge of man; which is not so to be understood, as though man cannot at all perceive or know it, for if we have peace with God, truly it must be felt in our heart and conscience, otherwise our hearts and minds could

not be preſerved by it, but it is thus to be underſtood; when tribulation cometh upon them, which know not to flie unto God with prayer and ſupplication, but truſt to their own wiſdom and care, whereby they ſeek peace, but that which reaſon is able to know, which is that whereby tribulation taketh an end, and is changed with outward tranquility; this peace doth not paſs reaſon, but is agreeable unto it, inaſmuch as it is ſought and found out of it; wherefore they that are void of faith are exceedingly diſquieted, and troubled until according to the reaſon of the fleſh they obtain this peace by hardly delivering or ridding themſelves of adverſity, not regarding whether they bring that to paſs by force or by craft, as he that hath received a wound ſeeketh to have it healed, &c. But they that rejoice ſincerely in the Lord, it is ſufficient for them, that they know that they have God favourable unto them, and have aſſured peace with him, they abide willingly in tribulation, being nothing careful for that peace of reaſon by the removing of outward troubles, but they endure them valiently, looking to be ſtrengthened inwardly by faith, taking no care whether the adverſities which they ſuffer, ſhall remain a ſhort or a long time, whether they ſhall be temporal or continuing, neither are diſquieted with caring what end they ſhall have; they commit all things to God, ſeeking not to know, when, how, where, or by whom he will give them quietneſs; wherefore God again ſheweth them this favour, that he maketh the end of their trial to be ſuch, and ſo great advantage, as no man could either ſuſpect or wiſh for; Lo, this is that peace of the croſs, the peace of God, the peace of conſcience, true Chriſtian peace, which maketh that a man outwardly alſo, as much as in him, leaveth quietly and peaceably with all men, and troubleth no man. This peace, reaſon is not able by any means to know or comprehend, that a man under the croſs may have quietneſs of mind and joy of heart, and peace even in the very invaſion of his enemies; this is the gift and work of God known to none, but to him that hath it, and hath tried it. Whereas St. Paul ſaith, 'Now the God of hope fill

'you

'you with all joy and peace in believing,' Rom. xv. 13. That which he called in these words peace in believing he calleth in our present text the peace of God. Moreover, St. Paul signifieth in these words, that whosoever will rejoice in the Lord by faith, and be meek and of a patient mind toward all by love, the devil undoubtedly is against him, and will raise up some cross, that he may drive him from so Christian a purpose, wherefore the apostle will have every one to be prepared against this assault of Satan, and to place his peace there where Satan cannot trouble it, namely in God, and not think how he may cast off the cross, but suffer the adversary to take on, and rage as he list, he in the main time patiently looking for the Lord, that he coming may make an end of adversities and troubles, for by this means, his mind heart, and conscience are preserved and kept in peace. Neither can patience endure, where the heart is not confirmed with this peace, for that he only which hath this peace doth throughly persuade himself that God is favourable unto him, and careful for him, and maketh no account what chanceth unto him from creatures. Moreover let no man understand here the hearts and minds, to be the will and knowledge of nature, but as St. Paul himself interpreteth, the hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, that is, such as we have in Christ, of Christ and under Christ. These are the hearts and minds which faith and love cause, with which they that be endued, do behave themselves most godly towards God, and most lovingly and gently toward their neighbour; toward God they so behave themselves, that they believe in him, and love him with their whole heart, and are also most ready, with their whole heart and with all their cogitations to do those things which shall be acceptable to God and their neighbours, as much as, yea, more than they are able. Such hearts and minds the devil goeth about with the fear of death and other troubles to terrify and drive from this godliness, erecting a false hope, by the devices and imaginations of men, wherewith the mind is seduced, that it may seek to be comforted and helped of it self or other

creatures, which if it do, ſurely, he hath drawn ſuch a man from the care of God, and wrapped him in his own vain care. Thus haſt thou, godly Reader, out of this ſhort text a moſt plentiful inſtruction of Chriſtian life, how thou muſt live toward God and thy neighbour, namely, that thou muſt believe that God is all things unto thee, and thou again muſt be all things unto thy neighbours, that thou muſt ſhew thy ſelf ſuch a one to thy neighbour as God hath ſhewed himſelf unto thee, that thou muſt receive of God and give to thy neighbour; all which are contained in faith and love, the whole ſum of all Chriſtianity.

SERMON

SERMON XX.

Concerning them that are under the Law, and them that are under Grace.

Gal. iv. 1. to the 7th. *Now I say, that the heir as long as he is a child, &c.*

THIS Text toucheth the very pith of St. Paul's chief doctrine, the cause why it is well understoodof so few,is not, for that it is so obscure and hard. but because there is almost no knowledge of faith left in the world, without which it cannot be that one should rightly understand St. Paul, who every where treateth of faith with such force of the spirit as he is able, I must therefore speak somewhat, that this text may be made plain, and that I may more conveniently bring light unto it in expounding it, I will speak a few words in manner of a preface. First therefore we must understand that that treatise, wherein is treated of good works, doth far differ from that wherein is treated of justification, as there is very great difference between the substance and the working, between a man and his work. Now justification is of man, and not of works: for man is either justified and saved, or judged and condemned, and not works. Neither is it in controversy among the godly, that man is justified by no work, but righteousness must come unto him from some otherwhere, than from his own works; for Moses writeth of Abel after this sort; 'The Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his 'oblation.' First he had respect to Abel himself, then to his oblation, because that Abel was first counted righteous, entire, acceptable unto God, and then for his sake, his oblation also was allowed, and not he because of his oblation. Again, God had no respect to Cain; and therefore neither to his oblation, where again thou seest, that regard is had first of the worker then of the work. Of this place it is very plainly gathered, that no work can be allowed of God, whereas he which worketh

worketh that work was not first acceptable to him; and again, that no work is disallowed of him, unless the author thereof be disallowed before. I think that these things will be sufficient concerning this matter in this place, of which it is easy to understand, that there are two sorts of works: some going before justification, and some following it, and that these last are good works indeed, but that those others do only appear to be good. Hereof cometh such disagreement between God, and those counterfeit holy ones, for this cause Nature and Reason rise and rage against the holy Ghost; this is that, whereof almost all the whole Scripture treateth. The Lord in his word defineth, that all works that go before justification are evil, and of no importance, and requireth that man himself before all things be justified. Again, he pronounceth all men, which are yet regenerate, and have not changed that nature, which they received of their parents, with the new creature of Christ, to be unrighteous and wicked, according to that saying, Psalm 116, 'All men are liars', that is unable to perform their duty, and to do those things, which by right they ought. And Gen. vi. 5. 'And that every imagination of the 'thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,' whereby undoubtedly it cometh to pass, that he is able to do nothing that is good, which hath the fountain of actions, that is his heart corrupted; and if he do many works which in outward shew seem good, they are no better than the oblation of Cain. Against this cometh forth reason, our reverend mistress, seeming to herself marvellous wise, yet indeed, is unwise and blind, and is not ashamed to gainsay her God, and to reprove him of lying, she being furnished with her fo lies and very strawye armour, to wit the light of nature, free-will, the strength of nature, also with the books of the heathen, and with the doctrines of men. She dareth with her evil sounding strings make a noise against God, that the works of a man even not yet justified are good works, and not works like unto Cain's, (which God pronounceth) yea, and so good, that he that worketh them is justified by them, for so Aristotle hath taught, that he that worketh well is made good. Unto this saying she leaneth and sticketh unmoveably

moveably, and wresteth the scripture clean contrary, contending that God will have respect first to theworks, then to the worker; such very devilish doctrine beareth the sway now every where in scools, colleges and monasteries, wherein no other saints than Cain was, have rule and authority. Now of this error another immediately springeth; they which attribute so much to works and do not accordingly esteem the worker and sound justification,go so far, that they ascribe all merit and sovereign righteousnes toworks done before justification, making almost no account of faith, alledging that which James saith, 'that without works it is dead:' which sentence of the Apostle when they little understand, they attribute almost nothing to faith,they always stick to works, whereby they think they do merit exceedingly of God, and are persuaded that for their works sake theyshall obtain the favour of God,and bythis means do they continually disagree with God, shewing themselves to be the right posterity of Cain. God hath respect unto man, these to the works of man; God alloweth the works for his sake that worketh, these require that for the works sake the worker may be crowned. Now God goeth not from his sentence, as it is meet and just, and these will seem nothing less than to err in any respect; they will not have their good works contemned, reason to be nothing esteemed, free-will to be counted uneffectual, or surely, if thou dost here strive against them, they begin to be angry with God, and count it a small matter to kill their brother Abel. But here perhaps thou wilt say, What is needful to be done? By what means shall I first of all become righteous, and acceptable to God? How shall I attain to this perfect justification? The gospel answereth, preaching that it is necessary that thou hear Christ, and repose thyself wholly in him, denying thyself, and distrusting all thine own strength; by this means thou shalt be changed from Cain to Abel,and being thyself acceptable, shalt offer acceptable gifts to the Lord. This faith, as it is preached unto thee for no merits of thine own, so is it given unto thee for no deserving of thine, but of meer grace; and this faith justifieth thee, thou being endued

endued herewith, the Lord remitteth all thy sins, and that by the contemplation of Christ his Son, in whom this faith believeth and trusteth. Moreover he giveth unto such a faith his spirit, which doth throughly change a man and make him new, so that now he hath other reason, and another will, than before, namely, that which is ready unto good; such a one worketh nothing but good works, neither can it be but good, which he being good before, shall do, whereof I have spoken somewhat before. Wherefore nothing else is required unto justification, than to hear Jesus Christ our Saviour, and to believe in him, howbeit neither of these is the work of nature, but only of grace; he therefore that goeth about to attain hereunto by works, shutteth the way to the gospel, to faith, grace, Christ, God, and all things that help unto salvation. Again, unto good works there is need only of justification, which he that hath attained, doth work only good works, and beside such a one, none. Hereof it sufficiently appeareth, that the beginning, the things following, and the order of man's salvation, are after this sort: First of all is required, that thou hear the word of God; next that thou believe, then that thou do work, and so at the last become saved and happy. He which changeth this order, without doubt is not of God. Paul also describeth this order, saying, Rom. x. 13. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher. And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Therefore Christ teacheth us to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, that is sincere preachers. When we hear these preach the true words of God, we may believe which faith justifieth a man, and maketh him godly indeed, and he now calleth upon God in the spirit of the sons, and worketh nothing but that which is good, and thus becometh a man saved; which is no other thing, than if I say, 'He that believeth shall be 'saved.' Again, he that worketh without faith is condemned, as Christ saith: He that doth not believe shall be condemned, from which no works shall deliver him.

Confer now herewith those things which are wont commonly to be spoken of honesty and righteousness. Are they not wont thus to say? I will endeavour, that I may yet become honest. It is meet surely that we study to lead an honest life and to do good works: Well, admit this to be so; but if one then ask them how we may apply ourselves unto honesty, and by what mean, we may attain unto it? They answer, that we must fast, pray, frequent temples, avoid sins, &c. Hereupon one becometh a Charter-house monk, another chooseth some other order of monks, another is consecrated a priest; some torment their flesh by wearing of hair cloth, others scourge their bodies with whips, others afflict themselves after other sorts. But these are even of Cain's brood, and their works are no whit better than the works of Cain; for the man himself continueth the same that he was before, ungodly, and without all justification, there is a certain change made only of outward works, of apparel, of places, &c. Neither are these any other than very apes of saints, for they do preposterously imitate the manner and work of saints, when as they think themselves nothing less than saints, they scarce think of faith, they presume only of such works as seem good unto themselves, thinking by them to come unto heaven. Of whom Christ said, 'Enter ye in at the straight 'gate;' for I say unto you, many seek to enter in at it, and cannot. Why is this? Because they know not what this narrow gate is; for it is faith which doth altogether annihilate or make a man nothing in his own eyes, and requireth that he put no trust in any of his own works, but that he lean only to the grace of God, and be prepared for it to leave and suffer all things. But those holy ones of Cain's brood think their good works to be the narrow gate, and are not therefore extenuated or made less, whereby they might enter; they do not leave confidence in their works, but gather them together in great couls, they hang them about them, and so go about to enter in, being burdened, and as it were swollen big, which is as possible for them, as for a camel with his bunched back to go through the eye of a needle. When thou shalt begin to preach unto these of faith, they laugh and hiss at thee: Dost thou count us, say

they, for Turks and Heathens, whom it behoveth now first to learn faith? Is there such a company of priests, monks and nuns, and is not faith known? Who knoweth not what he ought to believe? Even manifest sinners know that. And being after this fort animated and stirred up, they think that they be abundantly enduedwith faith, and that the rest is now to be finished, and made perfect by works; whereupon they make a small and slender account of faith, as I have said, because they be ignorant bothwhat faith is,and that it alonedoth justify. They call it faith; when they believe those thingswhich they have heard of Christ,which kind of faith the devils also have, and yet are nothing therefore justified; but this deserveth to be called rather an opinion ofmen than faith; for as we do oftentimes admonish, it is not sufficient that thou mayest worthily be called a Christian, to believe those things to be true, which are preached of Christ; Which kind of faith they of Cain's brood also have. But thou must also nothing doubt, that thou art of the number of them unto whom all those benefits of Christ are given and exhibited; which he that believeth, must plainly confess that he is holy, godly, righteous, the son of God, and certain of salvation, and that by no merit of his own, but by the only mercy of God poured forth upon him for Christ's sake; which he believeth to be so rich and plentiful, as it is indeed, that although he be as it were drowned in sins, he is notwithstanding thereby made holy, and the son of God. Wherefore if he should any thing doubt,he should procure exceeding ignominy and reproach to baptismwhich he hath received, and to the Lord's supper, and also reprove the word and grace of God of falshood; wherefore take heed that thou nothing doubt, that thou art the son of God, and therefore righteous by his grace, let all fear and care be here away. Howbeit thou must fear and tremble. that thou mayest persevere such a one unto the end: Thou must not being in this case, be careful that thou mayest become righteous and saved, but that thou mayest persevere and continue; neither must thou do this, as though it consisteth in thine own strength,for all thy righteousness and salvation isonly of

grace

grace, whereunto only thou muſt truſt: But whenthou knoweſt that it is of grace alone, and that thy faith is alſo the gift of God, thou ſhalt for good cauſe live in fear and care, leaſt that any temptation do violently move thee from this faith. Hereupon pertaineth that which is written in the 9th chap. of Eccleſiaſtes: "The righteous,and the wiſe,and their works are in thehandof God: no man knoweth either love, or hatred, by all that is before them. All things come alike to all,' &c. For the preſent time every one by faith is certain of our ſalvation,but conſtantly to ſtand and perſevere as it is the gift of the Lord, and not in our own ſtrength, ſo ought we always to have care and fear thereof. When they of Cain's brood hear faith to be treated of after this ſort, they cannot ſufficiently marvel at our madneſs, as it ſeems unto them. God turn this way from me ſay they that I ſhould confirm myſelf holy and godly, far be this arrogancy and raſhneſs from me; I am many ways a miſerable ſinner, I ſhould be mad, if I ſhould arrogate holineſs unto myſelf, And thus they mock at true faith, and count ſuch doctrine as this for execrable error, and go about with might and main to extinguiſh the goſpel. Theſe are they that deny the faith of Chriſt, and perſecute it in the whole world, of whom Paul ſpeaketh, 1 Tim. iv. 1. 'In the latter times ſome ſhall depart from 'the faith, &c. For we ſee it brought to paſs by themeans of theſe, that true faith lieth every where oppreſſed, is not only not preached, but alſo commmonly diſallowed and condemned, with all them that either teach or profeſs it. The pope, biſhops, colleges, monaſteries and univerſities have now above five hundred years perſecuted it with one mind and conſent, yea, and that marvellous ſtiffy and obſtinately, and have done no other thing unto the world, but every where as much as they were able driven many unto hell; which truly both hath been and is at that laſt and moſt hurtful perſecution of Antichriſt: The Lord at the laſt bring it to an end. If any object againſt the admiration, or rather mad ſenſleſneſs of theſe men, that we do nothing but that that is meet, if we count ourſelves even holy, truſting to the goodneſs of God juſtifying us, ſeeing that David prayed thus:

thus: 'Preſerve my ſoul, for I amholy,' Pſal. lxxxvi. 2. And for that Paul ſaith, 'The Spirit ofGod beareth wit-'neſs with our ſpirit,that we are the ſons ofGod.' They anſwer that theProphet and Apoſtle would not teach us in theſe words,or give an example,which we ſhould follow,but that they being particularly and ſpecial enlightened,received ſuch revelation ofthemſelves,that theywere holy. And after this ſort they miſinterpret and wreſt whatſoever place of ſcriptures affirmeth that we are holy, ſaying that ſuch doctrines are not written for us, but that they are rather peculiar miracles and prerogatives as they call them, which do not belong to all; which forged imagination we account of,as having come from their ſick brain, who when as they themſelvesvoid of faith, and favour nothing of the ſpirit, think and contend that there be none which have ſound faith and the ſpirit, whereby ſurely they believe themſelves to be thorns and thiſtles, not Chriſtians, but rather enemies and deſtroyers of Chriſtians,and perſecutors of the Chriſtian faith. Again, they are of this belief, that they ſhall be righteous and holy by their own works,and that becauſe of them God will give unto them ſalvation and eternal bleſſedneſs. But here ſee the madneſs of men: In their opinion and judgment it is a Chriſtian thing to think that we ſhall be righteous and ſaved becauſeof our works, and to believe that theſe things are given by the grace of God, they condemn as heretical. They attribute that to their own works, which they attribute not to the grace of God; they affirm that they do ſave us, and not this; they truſt to works, they cannot truſt to God's grace; which blindneſs worthily cometh unto them, inaſmuch as they will not build upon the rock, let them build upon the ſand, and ſo be drowned by their own means, that by their own works and ſatisfactions they may torment themſelves even unto death, gratifying Satan herein, for that they will not reſt upon the grace of God, and ſerve the Lord with a gentle and ſweet ſervice; for they that are endued with true faith and do reſt upon the grace of the Lord, it is marvellous how they are in God, by his goodneſs, of moſt quiet minds, and greatly rejoicing with holy joy; whereupon they

they do also with pleasure apply themselves to good works, not to such as these which Cain's brood do, as to feigned prayers, fasting, base and filthy apparel, and such like trifles, but to true and right good works, whereby their neighbour is profited, and from whence no small commodity redoundeth unto men. Moreover they are of most ready minds to suffer all things, inasmuch as they are certain that Goddoth favour them, and hath a care of them. These are right honest and profitable men, by whom both God is glorified, and men much profited; when as those of Cain's brood serve to no use, either before God or before men, no, an unprofitable lump of earth, yea, not only uprofitable, but exceeding pernicious and hurtful also both to themselves and to others: for inasmuch as they are destitute of true faith, they cannot give unto God his due glory, nor do those good works which may truly profit their neighbour; for those works that they apply themselves unto, are their own inventions, consisting in gestures, apparel, places, times, meats, and such like trifles, whereby their neighbour can be helped neither in body, nor mind, nor in any thing else; for what can it profit me that thy crown is shaven very broad; that thou weareſt a grey coul; what profit bringeth it, that thou fasteſt to day, and keepeſt holy day to morrow; that thou abstaineſt from this meat, and eateſt that; that thou remaineſt in this place; that thou readeſt and mumbleſt up daily so many words? Surely thou doſt nothing else by these, but torment thyself to please Satan, and to be a pernicious and hurtful example to thy neighbour; for there is no Christianity in thy life, being such thou believeſt not as it behoveth a Christian to believe, and therefore neither doſt thou pray Christianly: Thy fasting also is not true chastising of the body, but rashly taken upon thee instead of a good work: In fine, this thy service and study of religion is no other thing than, in time past among the Jews, was the religion of Moloch and Baal, in the honour of whom they did kill and burn even their own children. So pernicious and pestilent an example is this thy holiness, which seemeth so

godly unto thee, which when it marvellously counterfeiteth a shew of godliness, it draweth miserable men to the following thereof, and utterly extinguisheth true religion. Here perhaps some godly man will think, If the matter be so, and our works do not save us, but only to hear Christ and believe in him, who is given unto us of the Father to be our righteousness and salvation, to what end then are so many precepts given unto us, and why doth God severely require that they be obeyed? The present text of the Apostle shall give unto us the solution of this question and upon this fit occasion we will now enter into the exposition thereof. The Galatians being taught of Paul the faith of Christ, but afterwards seduced by false apostles, thought that the matter of our salvation must be finished and made perfect by the works of the law, and that faith only doth not suffice; these Paul calleth back again from works unto faith, with great diligence, and words marvellously effectual, plainly proving that the works of the law, which go before faith, do make us only servants, and be of no importance to godliness and salvation; but that faith doth make us the sons of God, and that from thence true good works do without constraint forthwith most plentifully flow. But here we must accustom ourselves to the words of the apostle: He calleth him a servant that is occupied in works without faith, whereof we have already treated at large; he calleth him a son, which is righteous and lively by faith alone, without works. The reason hereof is this: The servant, although he apply himself to good works, yet he doth it not with that mind with which a son doth, that is with a mind that is free, willing, and certain that the inheritance and all the good things of the Father are his; but doth it as he that is hired with a stipend in another man's house, who hopeth not that the inheritance shall come unto him. The works indeed of the son and the servant are alike, and almost all one according to the outward appearance, but their minds do differ exceeding much, and their hope is nothing like, even as Christ himself saith, 'The servant abideth 'not in the house forever: but the Son abideth ever,' John

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viii. 35. Theleof Cain's brood want the faithof ſons, which they themſelves confeſs, for they think it a moſt abſurd thing, and wicked arrogancy, to affirm themſelves to be the ſons of God and holy, therefore as they believe, even ſo are they counted before God, they never become the ſons of God, or holy, nevertheleſs they are exerciſed with the works of the law, and are well wearied, wherefore they are and remain ſervants for ever. And they receive no other reward, but theſe temporal things, namely, quietneſs of life, abundance of goods, dignity and honours, &c. which we ſee to be uſual among the followers of the Popiſh religion, than whom there is none at this day that liveth more pleaſantly, more wealthily, more glorioufly and honourably. But this is their reward, they are ſervants and not ſons, wherefore in death they ſhall be thruſt from all good things, neither ſhall any portion of the eternal inheritance come unto them, who in this preſent life would believe nothing thereof; ſo therefore it is that ſervantsand ſons are not much unlike in works, but in mind and faith they are moſt unlike. Now the Apoſtle endeavoureth here to prove (which indeed is the very matter) that the law with all the works thereof doth make us no other than ſervants, if this faith in Chriſt, whereof we have ſpoken be away; for that alone doth make us the ſons of God. Neither the law nor nature can give it, only the goſpel bringeth it, when it is heard with an holy ſilence of mind; it is the word of grace, which the Holy Ghoſt doth forthwith follow, as it is ſhewed in very many places, and eſpecially Acts 10. where we read, that the HolyGhoſt did by and by fall on Cornelius and his family, hearing the preaching of Peter. Moreover the law was given for this, that we might learn by it, how void we are of grace, and how far from being of the mind of ſons, yea, that we are plainly of a ſervile mind, for we being left to ourſelves, can in no wiſe be free from the law, neither if we do any good thing, do it willingly, foraſmuch as that faith of ſons is wanting, wherewith he that is endued, knoweth aſſuredly, that the eternal inheritance ſhall come unto him, and is of his own accord inclined and bent, with a willing and ready,

ſpirit, to do thoſe things that are good. Now theſe men do willingly confeſs that they are void of this faith, and if they would confeſs the truth indeed, they ſhould alſo plainly confeſs, that they had far rather be without all law, and that they are againſt their wills ſubject thereunto; wherefore all things are amongſt them conſtrained, and void of faith, and they are in very deed compelled to confeſs that by the law they cannot attain any further; which one thing they ought to learn by the law, and know, that they are ſervants, and have nothing belonging to ſons whereby they might be inflamed with deſire to come from ſervitude to the ſtate and condition of ſons; and might take no account of their own things, as indeed they ought to do, that God of his grace might advance them unto another ſtate by faith. Now this were a ſound underſtanding of the law, and the true uſe thereof, whereof this is the office, to reprove and convince men hereof, that they are ſervants and not ſons, as many as follow the law without faith, and that they do exerciſe themſelves therein plainly againſt their wills, and with no confidence of grace; for it cauſeth and maketh ſuch to be offended at it, and learn by it how unprepared and unwilling they are to that which is good, inaſmuch as they are void of faith, whereby it moveth them to ſeek help ſome other where, and not to preſume of their own ſtrength to ſatisfy it; for it requireth a ready will, and hearts of ſons, which alone can ſatisfy it, it utterly refuſeth ſervants, and them that are unwilling. But theſe of Cain's brood do not only of their own accord confeſs that they want this faith, which maketh the ſons of God, but alſo they perſecute it; they feel and know alſo full well, how unwillingly they bear the law, and had rather be free from it, nevertheleſs they think that they ſhall become righteous by theſe their unwilling and conſtrained works. They will continue ſervants, and will not be changed into ſons, and yet they would enjoy the goods of a ſtrange father. They do all things clean out of order, where by the law they ought to learn, that they are ſervants, and unwilling to do that which is good, and therefore ſhould by faith aſpire to the ſtate of ſons, notwithſtanding they

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go so far, that they seek to satisfy and fulfil it by their own works only; and thereby they do altogether hinder the end of the law, and strive against faith and grace, whereunto if they were not blind, the law would direct and drive them; and so they continue always a blind, blockish and miserable people. These things St. Paul teacheth, Rom. iii. and 7. and doth freely pronounce that no man is justified before God, by the works of the law, adding no other cause hereof than this, for that the knowledge of sin only cometh by the law. If thou wilt know how this cometh to pass, consider well some one of Cain's brood, and thou shalt by and by see it verified. First, he worketh his works according to the law, with great grief and labour, and yet he therewith confesseth, that he is uncertain whether he be the son of God, and holy; Yea, he condemneth and curseth this faith, as the most pernicious arrogancy and error of all other, and will continue in his doubting, until he be made certain by his works. Here thou seest plainly, that such a man is not good or righteous, seeing that he wanteth this faith and belief that he is counted acceptable before God and his son, yea, he is an enemy to this faith, and therefore of righteousness also; Wherefore neither can his works be counted good, although they pretend a fair shew of fulfilling the law. And thus it is easy to understand that which St. Paul saith; that no man is justified before God, by the works of the law; For the worker must be justified before God, before he worketh any good things, although before men, which esteem a man by outward things, and not by the mind, they are counted righteous which apply themselves to the doing of good works; For men judge the worker by the works, God judgeth works by the worker. Now, the first precept requireth, that we acknowledge and worship one God, that is, that we trust and rest in him alone, which indeed is the true faith, whereby we become the sons of God; But how easy is it by this precept to know, that sin is both in him of Cain's brood, and in thyself, inasmuch, as both of you want such a

faith even by your own nature? which thou couldeſt not know but by means of this law. And this is that which St. Paul meaneth when he ſaith, 'That by the law 'cometh the knowledge of ſin.' Now thou canſt be delivered from this evil of infidelity, neither by thine own power, nor by the power of the law, wherefore all thy works whereby thou goeſt about to ſatisfy the law, can be nothing but works of the law, of far leſs importance, than that they are able to juſtify thee before God; who counteth them wholly righteous, which truly believe in him, for they that only acknowledge him the true God, are his ſons, and do truly fulfil the law. But if thou ſhouldſt even kill thyſelf with works, yet is it ſo far off, that thy heart can obtain this faith thereby, that thy works are even a hindrance that thou canſt not know it, yea, they are a cauſe that thou doſt perſecute it.

Hereupon it is, that he that ſtudieth, to fulfil the law without faith, is afflicted for the devil's ſake, and not for God's ſake, and continueth a perſecutor both of faith and of the law, until he come unto himſelf, and doth plainly ceaſe to truſt in himſelf and in his own works, doth give this glory to God, who juſtifieth the ungodly, acknowledgeth himſelf to be nothing, and fighteth for God his grace, whereof he doth now know, being taught by the law, that he hath need. Then faith and grace come and fill him being empty, ſatisfy him being hungry, by and by follow good works which are truly good: Neither are they now the works of the law, but of the ſpirit, of faith and grace, and they are called in the Scriptures the works of God, which he worketh in us; For whatſoever we do by our own power and ſtrength, and is not wrought in us by his grace, without doubt, it is a work of the law, and availeth nothing to juſtification, but is both evil and hated of God, becauſe of the infidelity wherein it is done. Again, whatſoever he of Cain's brood worketh, he doth nothing from his heart, nothing freely, and with a willing mind, except he be as it were hired with ſome reward, or be commanded to do ſome ſuch thing whereunto he ought

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otherwise to be ready of himself; even as an evil and unthrifty servant suffereth himself to be brought to no work, unless he be hired with a reward, or commanded, whereunto he ought otherwise to be willing of himself. Now how unpleasant is it to a man to have such servants! But they of Cain's brood be plainly such, they would do no good works at all, if they were not either compelled by the fear of hell, or allured by the hope of present good things; whereby again thou seest, that these have no mind to the law, they gape only for gain, or are moved with fear, whereby they bewray themselves that they do rather hate the law from their heart, and had rather that there were no law at all: Wherefore it is plainly manifest, that they are not good, and consequently that neither their works be good: for how should evil men work good works? Moreover those their works, which in appearance and shew, seem to be good, are either wrested from them by fear, or are brought with promises. An evil heart can do nothing that is good. But this naughtiness of the heartand unwillingness to do good, the law bewrayeth when it teacheth, that God doth not greatly esteem what the hand doth, but what the heart doth, which, seeing it hateth the law that is good, who will deny it to be most evil? Surely it is a sin to be against the law, which is very good. Thus therefore sin is known by the law, according as St. Paul teacheth, forasmuch as we learn thereby, how our affection is not set on that which is good, which ought to terrify us, and drive us to cease to trust to our selves, and to long after the grace of God, whereby this naughtiness of the heart may be taken away, and our mind may become such, as is of it self ready to do good things, and loveth the law, which voluntarily, not for fear of any punishment, or respect of reward, but because it doth of its own accord like the law, and love righteousness, and worketh those things which are truly good; By this means only one is made of a servant a son, of a slave an heir; which mind and spirit thou shalt receive by no other means, than by faith in Christ, as it is before spoken at large.

Now let us come to treat of the text of St. Paul, Ver. 1. 'The heir as long as he is a child, differeth nothing 'from a servant, though he be Lord of all.'

He propoundeth a similitude taken of the custom of men; for we see that children, unto whom their parents have left some substance, be brought up no otherwise than if they were servants, they are fed and cloathed with their goods, but they are not permitted to do with them, nor use them according to their own mind, but are ruled with fear and discipline of manners, that so even in their own inheritance they live no otherwise than as servants; after the same sort is it also in spiritual things; God made unto the elect a covenant, when he promised that it should come to pass, that in the seed of Abraham, that is in Christ, all nations should be blessed, Gen. xxii. That covenant was afterwards confirmed by the death of Christ, and revealed and published abroad by the preaching of the Gospel; for the gospel is no other thing, than an open and general preaching of this grace, that in Christ blessing and grace is laid up for all men, which so many only shall receive as shall believe. Now before that this covenant is truly opened and made manifest to men, the sons of God live after the manner of servants under the law, and are exercised with the works of the law, although they cannot be justified by them, inasmuch, as they are servile and do nothing avail to justification, as it is said before; notwithstanding, because they are even then predestinate to life, when they are after the manner of servants held under the law, they are true heirs of heavenly good things, that is, of this blessing and grace of this covenant; altho' they as yet do not know, or enjoy it, but are wearied with works no otherwise than others that are void of faith. So at this day thou mayest find not a few, which now having faith, as they are the sons of God, so do they also enjoy the grace of God in the liberty of sons, when as a little before being drowned in works, they knew nothing at all of faith, being in all things like unto other hypocrites. Nevertheless, because they were before the foundation of the world

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appointed of God unto this faith and ſtate of ſons, they were even then the ſons of God before, when they were as yet altogether ignorant of faith. Where are ſome alſo which being, as yet, as it were, drowned in works, are like to ſervants and thoſe of Cain's brood, who notwithſtanding before God are ſons and heirs, which ſhall be brought unto the faith of ſons, leaving the ſtate of ſervants, and ſhall embrace the liberty and right of ſons, ſhall ceaſe from the works of the law, and come unto theinheritance of juſtification, that being juſtified by grace, they may work freely thoſe things that be good, to the glory of God, and advantage of their neighbours, being far from all fear, to hope, as well of juſtification, as of all other good things; for they ſhall then have and poſſeſs it by the covenant of the Father confirmed by Chriſt, and revealed, publiſhed, and as it were delivered into their hands by the goſpel, through the only grace and mercy of the Father. This covenant, both Abraham and all the fathers, which were endued with true faith, had no otherwiſe than we have, although before Chriſt was glorified, this grace was not openly publiſhed and preached. They lived in like faith, and therefore they obtained alſo like good things. They had the ſame grace, bleſſing and covenant with us, for there is one Father, and the ſame God of all. Thou ſeeſt therefore that St. Paul, as almoſt in all other places, ſo here alſo doth treat much of faith, that we are not juſtified by our works, but by faith alone, whereby not certain good things by piece-meal, but all good things at once do come unto us, for there is no good thing, which this covenant of God doth notcontain in it, it giveth and bringeth righteouſneſs, ſalvation, and God himſelf; works cannot be done at once, but by faith the whole inheritance of God is together received. From thence alſo good works do come, tho' not meritorious, whereby thou mayeſt ſeek ſalvation, but which with a mind already poſſeſſing righteouſneſs, thou muſt do with great pleaſure to the profit of thy neighbours; for thou ſhalt now have need of nothing, being endued with faith, which bringeth all things, yea, ſurely more things than one dare wiſh,

wish, much less can deserve; wherefore it is no marvel if such work all things freely, and so do unto their neighbour, as they both believe and rejoice, that God of his goodness, and by the merit of Christ hath done unto them. What reward shall they hope for which already have all things? the shadow whereof those most miserable ones of Cain's brood seek by their works, but they shall never find it, they follow it but they shall never come unto it. Ver. 2. 'But is under Tutors and Governors, until the time appointed of the Father.' Tutors and Governors are they which do bring up the heir and so rule him, and order his goods, that neither he waste his inheritance by riotous living, neither his goodness otherwise perish or be consumed. They permit him not to use his goods at his own will or pleasure, but suffer him to enjoy them as they shall be needful and profitable unto him. First, whereas they keep him at home, and inform him with good manners, what do they else but prepare and instruct him, whereby he may most commodiously and long enjoy his inheritance? Again, the most straightly and severely they bring him up, so much greater desire they stir up and enflame in him to come to, and enjoy his inheritance. For as soon as he beginneth to be of any discretion and judgment, it cannot be but grievous unto him, to leave at the commandment and will of another. After the same sort standeth the case of the elect, which are brought up and instructed under the law, as under a Master, to the liberty of the sons. First the law profiteth them in this, that by the fear of it, and of the punishment, which it threatneth, they are driven from sin, at the leastfrom the outward work, least that the liberty of sinning encrease overmuch, and remove them from all religion of God, that hope of salvation being past, and God quite contemned, they should run headlong without all fear into all kinds of evil, as some desperate persons are wont to do. Again, the law is profitable to them in this, that by it they are brought unto knowledge of themselves, and learn how unwillingly they live under the law, and that they do no good at all with a willing

ing and ready mind as it becometh ſons, but with a ſervile and unwilling mind; whereby they may eaſily ſee, what is the root of this evil, and what is eſpecially needful unto ſalvation, to wit, a new and a willing ſpirit to that which is good; which ſurely neither the law, nor the works of the law, are able to give, yea, the longer and the more that they apply themſelves unto them, ſo much more unwilling ſhall they find themſelves, and with ſo much more grief to work thoſe things that are good. Hereupon now they learn, that they do not ſatisfy the law, although outwardly, they live according to the preſcript rule thereof; for as they do pretend to obey it in work, ſo in mind they do hate it, wherefore in mind alſo they remain ſinners, although they pretend themſelves righteous by works, that is, they are like unto thoſe of Cain's brood, and to hypocrites, whoſe hand indeed is compelled to good, but they have a heart, which as it is an enemy to the law, ſo doth it verily conſent unto ſins, and is miſerably ſubject unto them. To know this concerning themſelves is not the loweſt degree to ſalvation. Hereof alſo we may ſee, how fitly St. Paul calleth ſuch conſtrained works the works of the law; For they flow not from a ready and willing heart, but are inforced by the law, the heart declining another way. Howbeit, the law doth not require works alone, but much rather the heart itſelf, that we might ſay, not only the works, but rather the heart of the law; not only the hands of the law, but rather the mind, will, and all the ſtrength of the law. Whereupon it is ſaid in the firſt Pſalm of the bleſſed man, 'But his delight is in the law of the 'Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.' Such a mind the law requireth indeed, but it giveth it not, neither can it give it of its own nature, whereby it cometh to paſs, that while the law continueth to exact it of a man, and to condemn him as long as he hath not ſuch a mind, as diſobedient to God, he is in anguiſh on every ſide, his conſcience is grievouſly terrified, and without all counſel and help. Then indeed, he is moſt ready for grace, and this is that time

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appointed of the Father, when his servitude shall end, and he should enter into the state of the sons. For being thus in distress and terrified, seeing that by no other means he can avoid the condemnation of the law, he turneth himself wholly to pray to the Father for grace, he acknowledgeth his frailty, he confesseth his sins, he ceaseth to trust in works, and doth altogether, as it is meet, humble himself, perceiving now full well, that between him and a manifest sinner, there is no difference at all but of works, that he hath a wicked heart, even as any other sinner hath; yea, it may be that such hypocrites do far more hate the law in the heart, than those famous sinners, which are even as it were drowned in sin. For while these are even wearied with the works of sins, and do try the filthiness of them, it oftentimes cometh to pass, that they do in some part, loath and detest them, when as those righteous ones do always think those things that they have not tried, to be more sweet, neither can they believe that there is so much gall in sins, whereof they are by nature inflamed with such a desire, and therefore as they do more earnestly love sin, so consequently, they do much worse hate the law, which as a certain school-master, is always against their desire. Moreover, forasmuch as the condition of mans nature is such, that it is able to give to the law, works only, and not the heart, who doth not see how greatly it is contemned of us? An unequal division truly, to dedicate the heart, which doth incomparably excel all other things, to sin, and the brutish hand of the law. which is nothing else, but to offer chaff to the law, and the wheat to sin, the shell to God, and the kernel to satan. So it cometh to pass which is in the gospel, that the wickedness of him, which is in thy judgment a desperate sinner, are counted as a mote; and thine, which so playest the hypocrite, are counted as a beam. If this evil be added hereunto, that such hypocrites do not see a beam in their own eye, but being blinded, do persevere in their accustomed works, not marking this their inward abomination of the heart, they by and by burst

burſt forth to judge and condemn others, they deſpiſe ſinners, as he did in the goſpel, they think themſelves not like unto them, they are not as other men are; they think themſelves alone godly and righteous; whoſe ungodlineſs if one reprove, and as it is meet bewray, they by and by, are in a rage and fury, and ſtick not to kill innocent Abel, and to perſecute all thoſe that follow the truth; and they will ſeem to do that to defend good works, and to obtain righteouſneſs; neither do they promiſe to themſelves a ſmall reward for this, inaſmuch as they do, as they ſay, perſecute heritics, blaſphemers, them which be ſeduced and do ſeduce with miſchievous error, which labour to ſeduce and pluck even them from good works. Here thou mayeſt ſee that that ſheweth it ſelf, whatſoever the ſcriptures attribute to theſe men being ſurely moſt peſtilent ſpirits, to wit, that they are a generation of Vipers, and Serpents. They are no other but Cain's brood, and ſo they do continue, ſervants they are, and ſervants they do remain. But they whom God hath choſen Abels and ſons, do learn by the law, how unwilling a heart they have unto the law, they fall from their arrogance, and are by this knowledge of themſelves which the law bringeth, brought even unto nothing in their own eyes. Then by and by cometh the goſpel, and lifteth them up being humbled, whereby the Lord giveth his grace unto them, thus caſting down themſelves, and endueth them with faith. Hereby they receive that covenant of the eternal bleſſing, and the holy Ghoſt, which reneweth their heart, that now it is delighted with the law, hateth ſin, and is willing and ready to do thoſe things that are good; and here now thou mayſt ſee not the works, but the heart of the law. And this is the very time appointed to be heir of the father, when he muſt be no longer a ſervant but a ſon, and doth now begin to be led by a free ſpirit, being do more kept in ſubjection under tutors and governors, after the manner of a ſervant; which is even that that St. Paul teacheth in the words following, Ver. 3. "Even ſo we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."

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By the word elements, thou mayeſt underſtand here the firſt principles or law written, which are as it were the firſt exerciſes and inſtructions of holy learning, whereof it is ſpoken alſo, Heb. v. 12. " For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the firſt principles of the oracles of God.' And Coloſ. ii. 8. " Beware leſt any man ſpoil you thro' philoſophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world." Again Gal. iv. 9, 10. "How turn you again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye deſire again to be in bondage? Ye obſerve days and months, and times, and years." Here as it were in contempt he calleth the law elements, he addeth alſo, impotent, and beggarly, both becauſe it is not able to perform that righteouſneſs, which it requireth, and alſo for that it maketh men indeed poor and omnipotent. Forwhereas it earneſtly requireth a heart and mind given to godlineſs, and nature is not able to ſatisfy it herein, it plainly maketh man feel his poverty, and to acknowledge his infirmity, that that is by right required of him, which he not only hath not, but alſo is not able to have. Hereunto pertaineth that which St. Paul hath left written, 2 Cor. iii. 6. ' For the letter killeth, but the ' Spirit giveth life.'

Moreover, St. Paul calleth them the elements of the world, for all that obſerving of the law, which men not yet renewed by the ſpirit do perform, doth conſiſt in worldly things, to wit, in places, times, apparel, perſons, veſſels, and ſuch like. But faith reſteth in no worldly thing, but only in the grace, word, and mercy of God, neither doth it make a man righteous and ſafe by any outward thing, but only by the inviſible and eternal grace of God; wherefore it counteth alike, day, meats, perſons, apparel, and all things of this world; for none of theſe by it ſelf doth either further or hinder godlineſs and ſalvation, as it doth the righteouſneſs of thoſe of Cain's brood, which is as it were tied to thoſe outward things. Faith therefore deſerveth nothing leſs, than to be called the elements of the world, by which we obtain the fulneſs of heavenly good things;

things; and altho' it be occupied also in outward things, yet it is addicted to no outward thing, but doth freely in all things, that which it seeth may be done to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbour, always continuing free and the same, and yet is made all things to all men, that so the conversation thereof may want all peculiar respect and difference. With those of Cain's brood it agreeth neither in name nor in any thing; one of them eateth flesh, another abstaineth from it; one weareth black apparel, another white; one keepeth this day holy, another that; every one hath his elements, under which he is in bondage; all of them are addicted to the things of the world, which are frail, and perish. Wherefore they are no other but servants of the elements of the world, which they call holy orders, godly ordinances, and ways to go to heaven, against these St. Paul speaketh, Colos. ii. 20, to 23. "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world; why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances? Touch not, taste not, handle not: Which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." By this and other places above-mentioned, it is plain, that all monasteries and colleges, whereby we measure the state of spiritual men as we call them, do plainly disagree with the gospel, and Christian liberty, and that therefore it is much more dangerous to live in these kinds of life, then among most prophane men; For all their things are nothing but rudiments, and ordinances of the world, consisting in the difference and use of apparel, place, times, and other present things, whereunto seeing they are so addicted, that that hope by them to attain righteousness and salvation, faith is made no account of amongst them, neither are they Christians but in name, wherefore all their life and holiness, is meer sin, and most detestable hypocrisy. It is needful therefore, that they that are occupied in such ordinances, should above all other men most diligently look unto themselves, that they trust

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not to these ordinences, that they be not too much addicted unto them, but that they do persevere in a free faith, which is tied to none of these outward things, but resteth in the only grace of God; For the fair shew of life and feigned holiness, which is in those ordinances, doth with a marvellous and secret force withdraw from faith, more than those manifest and gross sins, whereof open-sinners are guilty, and doth easily make men such as St. Paul here speaketh of, 'When we werechildren, 'wewere in bondage under therudiments of theWorld,' that is, when we were as yet ignorant of faith, and were exercised only with the works of the law, we did these outward works of the law, consisting in worldly things, but with an unwilling mind, and with no faith, hoping that by these rudiments of the world we should obtain salvation, wherefore we were no other than servants. Now this false and servil opinion, faith alone taketh away, and teacheth us to trust unto, and rest upon the only grace of God, whereby at once is given freely, that which is needful to work all things. For these works of the law, if that false opinion were away, were not ill of themselves. Verse 4. 'But when 'the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his son 'made of a woman, made under the law.' Verse 5. 'To redeem them that were under the law,' that we might receive the adoption of sons.' After St. Paul had taught, that righteousness and faith cannot come to us by the law, neither can we deserve it by nature, he sheweth him by whom we obtain true righteousness and faith, and which is the author of our justification. Now this could not come unto us without any price, for it cost a very great price. even the son of God; The apostle therefore saith, 'When the fulness of time was come,' that is, when the time was ended, that time, I say: wherein it behoved us to live children and servants under the discipline of the Law. Wherefore the master of sentences hath erred here, who interpreted the fulness of time, the time of grace, which began at the birth of Christ, plain contrary to the apostle, who whereas he hath written, the

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fulneſs of time, this man hath interpreted, the time of fulneſs; for Paul ſpeaketh of the time, which was appointed of the Father to the Son, wherein he ſhould live under tutors. Now as this time was full come to the Jews and ended, when Chriſt came in the fleſh, ſo is it daily fulfilled to others, when they come unto the knowledge of Chriſt, and do change the ſervitude of the law, with the faith of the ſons. And this indeed is that coming, whereby alone we obtain the liberty of ſons, without which that corporal coming would avail nothing; for Chriſt even for this cauſe hath come unto us, that believing in him, we may be reſtored to true liberty, by which faith they of the antient time alſo obtained the liberty of the ſpirit. And ſo whereas he ſhould come to the holy men of old time, he came even then, foraſmuch as by faith they felt him to be their true Saviour and Deliverer, howbeit he is not yet come to our Jews, although he is gone away again in body long ſince. for they do not believe in him. All from the beginning of the world to the end, muſt truſt unto the coming of Chriſt, whereby alone ſervitude is changed into liberty, but yet by faith, either in Chriſt being to come, as it was before he was born, or in him being come, as it is now; wherefore as ſoon as thou beginneſt to believe in Chriſt, he cometh unto thee a Deliverer and Saviour, and now the time of bondage is ended, that is, as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, the fulneſs thereof is come. This place ſurely is very copious and containeth in it divers things moſt worthy to be known, ſo that I greatly fear, that it ſhall not be handled by us according to the worthineſs thereof; for it teacheth that it is not ſufficient to believe that Chriſt is come, but that we muſt alſo believe that he was ſent of God, is the ſon of God, and alſo very man, born of a virgin, who alone hath fulfilled the law, and that not for himſelf, but for us, that is, for our ſalvation's ſake. Let us weigh and conſider theſe things in order: Firſt. it is ſufficiently taught in the goſpel of John, that Chriſt is the ſon of God, and was ſent of God, which he that believeth not is in a moſt miſerable caſe, as Chriſt himſelf pronounceth, John viii. 24. 'If ye believe not that I

'am he, ye shall die in your sins. And John i. 4. In him 'was life, and the life was the light of men.' For this cause the mind of man neither may nor ought to enjoy any other thing than that sovereign good, so that it should be satisfied with any other than with it, whereof it was made, and which is the fountain of all good things; wherefore it is not the will of God that we should believe or repose our trust in any other thing, neither doth this honour belong to any other, and therefore God himself joined himself to man, being made man, that he might more forcibly allure men into him, and stir them up to believe in him. No good could come unto God hereby, but it was necessary for us that he should be made man, lest that we should believe in any other thing than in God alone; for if we should believe in Christ and not in God, as God should be deprived of his honour, so should we be deprived of life and salvation; for we must believe in one God, who is the very truth, and we without him can neither live nor obtain salvation. Whereas therefore the Apostle saith God sent forth his Son, it is thereby manifest that he was before he came, and was made man. Now if he be a son, he is more than a man or an angel, which seeing they are the highest creature, surely he is also true God; for to be the son of God is more than to be an angel, as it is else where declared. Again, seeing that he is sent of God and is his son, he must needs be another person; and so the Apostle teacheth here, that the Father and the Son are one God, and two Persons. Of the Holy Ghost it shall be spoken hereafter.

The second thing which ought here to be considered, is, that Christ is very man and the son of man. This Paul teacheth, when he saith made of a woman; for surely that that is made or born of a woman, is man; A woman by nature bringeth forth nothing but very man. Thus it is necessary that we believe, as the Lord himself declareth, John vi. 53. 'Except ye eat the flesh of 'the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.' But to eat and drink his flesh and blood, is nothing else but to believe that Christ took these upon him indeed, and did also yield them to death for our sake. This is

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that covenant which was promised to Abraham, 'In thy 'seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed,' Gen. xxii. 18. Christ is this seed, and therefore the true son of Abraham, his flesh and blood Hereupon it appeareth that they prevail nothing, which make a proper way unto themselves to God by their own works and godliness, and neglecting Christ strive to come directly unto God, as the Turks and Jews do. This Christ alone is the Mediator the blessed Seed, by whom thou must receive blessing, otherwise thou shalt continue for ever in malediction; this covenant of God shall not be violated because of any. Thus Christ himself saith, John vi. 'No man cometh to the Father but by me.' The nature of God is otherwise higher than that we are able to attain unto it; wherefore he hath humbled himself unto us, and taken upon him that nature which is best known and most familiar unto us, viz. even our own. Here he looketh for us, here he will receive us: he that will seek him here, shall find; he that will ask here, shall be heard; here is the throne of grace and the true mercy-seat, from which none is driven or thrust, which with true faith resorteth unto it. They which do here neglect him, as though he were made man for nought, and in the mean season do without a Mediator pray unto God, who hath created heaven and earth, they shall pray indeed, but none shall help them; they shall cry, but none shall hear them. The third thing which is here set forth unto us to believe, is, that Mary the mother of Jesus is a virgin; this Paul affirmeth, when he saith, that he was made of a women, and not of a man, as others are wont. This is that one man, which was born only of a woman: He would not say of a virgin, for that a virgin is not a name of nature, but a woman signifieth a sex and certain condition, whereunto it belongeth to be with child, and bring forth, that is, to do the parts of a mother. Seeing therefore that Mary was a mother indeed, she is rightly called a woman; for she brought forth fruit unto us, which belongeth to a mother, and not to a virgin, although she brought it forth alone, without the means of man, wherein she was

declared both a singular virgin and woman. But because it is of greater importance to the Apostle and unto all us, that Mary is a woman, and thereby the mother of Christ, than that she is a virgin, for that is only an ornament unto her, but in that she was a woman, she brought forth him which was salvation unto all, for this cause, I say, the Apostle calleth her rather a woman than a virgin: Neither was it considered in choosing her, that she was a virgin, but that she was a woman; for that she being a virgin became a mother, the cause was, for that it behoved that Christ should be born without sin, and therefore without the commixion of man; for of the seed of a sinful man, nothing could be born but that which is defiled with sin; but it behoved that Christ should be that blessed Seed, whose blessing should be poured forth upon all, as the manner of the divine covenant required. Whereupon it is gathered, that Christ could not be born of the seed of man, for that all men are by nature under the curse; for how should blessing be promised to come unto all by Christ, if all were not subject to the curse? Forasmuch then as the covenant of God promised to Abraham, did require these two things, both that Christ should be the true son of Abraham, that is, his seed, his true flesh and blood, and that also he should be born pure from sin; this mean was invented, that he should of Mary, being very woman and the daughter of Abraham, be born very man, and the right off-spring of Abraham; and that also he should be born without the commixion of man, a virgin being conceived with child by the only means of the Holy Ghost, that being full of blessing, he might derive the same unto all believers. So was the covenant of God fulfilled on either side; and it came to pass, that Christ became both the true seed of Abraham, and yet free from all contagion of Adam, and is also the author of eternal blessing to them that believe. Wherefore although Mary be holily to be reverenced by the name of virgin, yet by no comparison greater reverence is due unto her than by the name of woman, for that her most holy members, inasmuch as she was a woman, were advanced unto this dignity, that they were as means toward

toward the fulfilling of the holy covenant of God, and by them he was brought forth, which was to put away all curse from them that believe in him, that so he might be both the blessed Seed of Abraham, and the blessed Fruit of the womb of Mary. Unto which benefit the virginity only had not been sufficient, yea, it had been even unprofitable. The fourth thing whereof the present place of the Apostle doth admonish us, is, that Christ hath satisfied the law for us; which he also witnesseth of himself, Mat. v. 17. 'I am not come to 'destroy, but to fulfil.' This also the reason of the covenant requireth; for by this Seed of Abraham all men must be delivered from the curse, it is necessary that by it the law is fulfilled; for as men are by nature the children of wrath, and subject to the curse, so it must needs be accursed, whatsoever they do, for it is before proved at large, that he which is evil himself, can work nothing that is good; likewise that we can do nothing that God will approve, unless we ourselves be approved of him before: And seeing that the law requireth the heart, which cannot be performed by them which are not as yet regenerate by the Spirit, it must needs be that all the sons of Adam are guilty of transgressing the law, and unless, whereas they themselves are not able, another, viz. Christ, should perform that which the law requireth, and to satisfy the law for them, they should altogether perish by the curse of the law. But when as Christ, going about to shew that the heart is required of the law, did condemn the works which proceed not from a heart that is godly and consenting unto the law, he was accused of the Pharisees, that he was come to destroy the law. Because therefore he would take away this false opinion of himself, he said, 'Think not that I am come 'to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to 'destroy, but to fulfil;' yea, and I will give a spirit unto them that be mine, which shall justify their heart by faith, and incline it unto true good works. The same is usual with Paul also, who, Rom. iii. 21. when he had rejected the works of the law, and extolled faith, answering such an objection, saith, 'Do we then make void 'the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the

law. For we teach, that the true fulfilling of the law is by Christ. The like also is wont to be objected to us, as though we did forbid good works, when we disallow monasteries with their works, and teach that they must first by faith become good and approved of God, whereby they may afterward do true good works, by which both their flesh may be chastised, and their neighbours edified. Here we must note moreover, that the law can be fulfilled by no man, but by him which being free from the law is no more under it; we must accustom ourselves also to the manner of Paul's speech, that we may know assuredly who is under the law, and who is not under the law. As many therefore as work good works, because the law hath so commanded, being brought thereunto either with fear of punishment, or hope of reward, are under the law, and are compelled to do good things and to be honest, being not brought hereunto of their own voluntary will. Wherefore the law hath dominion over them, whose servants and captives they are; now such are all men, that are not yet regenerate by Christ, which every one may easily learn with himself by experience, every man's own conscience shewing it unto him. We all find ourselves so affected, that if no law did urge us, and both the fear of punishment, and hope of reward were away, and it were plainly free for us to do what we list, we would do altogether those things that are evil, and omit the things that are good, especially either temptation moving us, or occasion provoking us; but now, forasmuch as the law stayeth us with the threatnings and promises thereof, we do oftentimes abstain from evil things, and do those things that are good, howbeit we do them not for the love of goodness, and hatred of evil, but only for fear of punishment, and respect of reward; wherefore being left wholly to ourselves, we are servants of the law, neither do we bear it any otherwise than servants do their hard and cruel master.

But they that are not under the law, that is, are not so against their wills in subjection under the dominion thereof they of their own accord do good works, and abstain from evil, being neither terrified with the threatnings

nings of the law, nor allured with the promises thereof, but even for that they do of their voluntary will bear a love to honesty, and hate that which is dishonest, and are also from their heart delighted with the law of God, so that if there were no law made, notwithstanding they would desire to live no otherwise than the law commandeth; as, to shun those things that are evil, and apply themselves to honest studies and exercises. They that are such, are sons; whom not nature, but that only blessed seed of Abraham, that is, Christ, could make such, renewing by his grace and spirit the hearts of them that believe in him; wherefore not to be under the law, is not to be free from the law, that they may do those things that are contrary thereunto, and omit those things that are good, but it is to do good things and abstain from wicked things, not through compulsion or necessity of the law, but by free love and with pleasure, even as if no law commanded them, and their own nature brought them hereunto, as indeed it doth, howbeit the new nature of the spirit, not that old nature of the flesh; for as there is need of no law for the body, which may compel it to eat, to drink, to digest, to sleep, to go, to stand, to sit, and to do the other works of nature, for that it is ready to do them of its own nature, when the case so requireth, and when it is meet, without all respect either of reward or punishment, and may not unfitly he said, as concerning these things, not to be under a law, notwithstanding thereupon nothing less followeth, than that it doth therefore abstain from such works, unto which indeed it so much the more applieth itself as they are less commanded, and are more natural unto it: After the same sort altogether doth the godly man behave himself concerning the works of godliness, he is carried to the doing of them by that his new nature of the spirit, altho' there were no law at all, and all both hope of reward and fear of punishment were away. This only is the true liberty of a Christian man, and the deliverance of him from the law, whereof Paul speaketh, 1 Tim. i. 9. 'The law it not made for a righteous man.' Which is as much as if he had said, A righteous

man of his own accord doth good things, abſtaineth from evil, having no regard either of reward or of puniſhment. The ſame thing alſo he meaneth by that ſaying, Rom vi. 15. 'Weare not underthe law, but under 'grace?' That is, ye are ſons, not ſervants: Ye live holily; being compelled or enforced with nothing, but of your free and of itſelf ready will. To the ſame effect pertaineth that ſaying alſo. Rom. viii. 15, 'Yehave 'not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear; but 'ye have received the ſpirit of adoption.' The law maketh a fearful, that is, a right ſervile and Cainiſh ſpirit, but grace giveth the free ſpirit of ſons, like unto Abel's by Chriſt the bleſſed Seed of Abraham. Wherefore the 51ſt Pſalm ſpeaketh, 'Uphold me with thy free ſpirit.' Whereupon, in the 118th Pſalm, Chriſtian people are ſaid to be of a free will; moreover Chriſt hath ſo fulfilled the law, that he only of all mankind hath of his own accord ſatisfied it, being with nothing compelled or enforced thereunto, neither is any other able to do the ſame, unleſs he receive it of him, and by him: And therefore Paul ſaith here, 'God ſent forth his Son 'made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them 'that were under the law.' The fifth thing therefore that Paul here commendeth unto us to be believed, is, that Chriſt for our ſake was made under the law, that he might deliver us from the bondage of the law, and of unwilling ſervants make us free ſons; whereupon he ſaith, 'To redeem them that were under the law,' that is, might deliver them from the law. Now he delivereth from the law by the means aforeſaid, not by deſtroying or utterly aboliſhing the law, but by fulfilling it, and giving a free ſpirit, which ſhall do all things willingly, without any reſpect either of the threatnings or the promiſes of the law, yo otherwiſe than if there were no law at all given, and is carried thereunto of his own nature. After which ſort Adam and Eve were affected before they had ſinned. But by what means is the ſpirit given, and liberty gotten? Now otherwiſe than by faith, for he that truly believeth that Chriſt came for this cauſe, that he might deliver us from the law, and that he hath delivered him already, he, I ſay, hath

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indeed received the ſpirit of liberty, and doth verily obtain that which he believeth; for both faith and this ſpirit of ſons come together. Whereupon St. Paul ſaith here; that Chriſt hath delivered us from the law, for this, that we might receive the adoption of ſons; both which come unto us by faith. Thus therefore we have thoſe five things, whereof St. Paul admoniſheth us in this ſo plentiful and fruitful a place. But here riſeth a queſtion foraſmuch as to be under the law, is to be ſubject to the law by compulſion, and to obey the law no otherwiſe than unwillingly, ſo that none of them which are under the law, are able to ſatisfy the law. Why St. Paul ſaith, that Chriſt was made under the law, I anſwer, that the apoſtle maketh a very great difference between Chriſt, who was made under the law, and other men who are born under the law. For whereas he ſaith, that Chriſt was made under the law, he would ſignify, that Chriſt did put himſelf under the law of his own accord, and was with his will made ſubject unto it of the Father, when as he might not have been under the law; but we were under the law, being the ſervants of the law by nature, and bearing the dominion thereof unwillingly, as Chriſt was willingly, not by nature, and againſt his will. Wherefore there is as great difference between, to be made under the law, and, to be under the law by nature, as between theſe, to be ſubject to the law of free-will, and to be ſubject to the law by ſervile conſtraint. It was free unto Chriſt, to be under the law, or not to be under it, and he made himſelf ſubject to it of his own accord, that he might moſt diligently do all things that the law requireth; but we were under the law, even againſt our will.

Thou mayeſt ſee a reſemblance hereof in St. Peter, and the angel which came into the priſon to Peter, to leliver him. Both of them were then in the priſon, but Peter was there being caſt into it of Herod, not of his own accord, wherein he was alſo to abide, for he could not go forth when he would. But the angel went into the priſon of his own accord, whereupon it was free for him

him also to go forth when he would; he was there only for St. Peter's sake, and not for his own, and freely even at his own will, whom when St. Peter heard and followed, it was free for him a so to go forth of the prison, whereas before it was not. This prison is the law; St Peter is our conscience: The angel is Christ; Christ being absent, our conscience is hold captive of of the law, and being unwilling of itself, is moved unto good things, by the threatnings and promises thereof, and is tied and bound unto honest things with these as with two chains. The keepers of this prison are the teachers of the law, which declare the force of the law unto us So we being bound in the prison of the law, Christ cometh unto us, and willingly maketh himself subject to the law, and doth the works of the law of his own accord, which we did bend ourselves to do against our wills, yea, and doth them for our sake, that he may join us unto him, and also bring us out together with himself; for he may easily go forth, who is held in the prison by no necessity. If now we cleave unto him, and follow him, we also do go forth. But this cleaving to him and following of him is nothing else, than to believe in him, and not to doubt that he became man, and was made subject to the law, for thy salvation sake: together with this faith cometh the spirit, he by and by maketh thee ready and willing to do with pleasure all things that the law requireth; and so truly delivereth thee from the captivity of the law, those chains of threatning and promises fall off from thee, and thou mayest now go whether thou list, that is, thou mayest live according to thine own will, or rather according to the will of the holy Ghost ruling all things in thee; finally, what good things soever thou dost, thou dost them from the heart, and with great pleasure. Moreover, that it may be made more plain, after what sort Christ made himself subject to the law, we must understand that he was made under the law after two sorts, both for that he did perfectly perform the works of the law, and also for that he suffered and overcame the curse and punishment thereof for our sake. For

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he was circumcised, presented in the temple, and the time of the purification being furnished, was obedient to his parents. All which things he might have omitted, being Lord of the law, and over all; Howbeit he applied himself to these things freely of his own will, not being either compelled by any fear, or allured by any hope. In outward works he was in the mean season altogether like unto them which were under the law, that is, which did the works of the law against their wills, inasmuch, as his free spirit was hidden from others, even as also the servile and constrained will of others is hidden; and so he both was under the law, and not under the law. He behaved himself outwardly in works, as they which are unwillingly held under the law; when as notwithstanding he was not under the law as they, but of his own free will: Wherefore in respect of his works he was under the law, but in respect of his will he was free from the law; but we as well by will as by works are under the law by nature, for that we do works according to the rule of the law, of necessity, yea, and we do them with that will the law constraineth and urgeth, inasmuch, as we do not endeavour to do them of our own accord. Christ made himself subject to the punishment of the law also for our sakes of his own will. He did not only perform those works which the law commandeth, but he suffered the punishment also which was due to us being transgressors thereof. The law condemneth to death and the eternal curse, all those that continue not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them, as St. Paul, Gal. iii. reciteth out of Moses, Levit. xviii. Now it is declared at large before that the law is fulfilled by no man, but that all men are against their wills held captives of the law, wherefore every one is subject to death and the curse, so that there is no man subject to the law in respect of works, and will, which is not also subject to it in respect of the curse; for it curseth and condemneth all that do not perform it with their whole heart. But here Christ maketh intercession for them that are his, and the judgment which we have deserved, he taketh upon himself, he

suffered

suffered the punishment due unto us, willingly making himself subject to death and the curse, that is, to eternal damnation, no otherwise, than if he had transgressed the whole law, and had more than all, deserved the sentence thereof against transgressors, when as he did not only break the law, but himself alone fulfilled it; yea, and fulfilled it, when as he ought nothing to it, so that he suffered otherwise than he deserved, in two respects; both for that he ought nothing to the law, if he had not observed it, and also for that moreover he most diligently observed it, so that if the law had especial dominion over him, yet had he come in no danger thereof. But on the other side whereas we suffer, we suffer by double right; both for that by the transgression of the law, we have deserved all the punishment thereof, and also for that, if we had deserved nothing, yet being creatures, we ought to be obedient to the will of our Creator. Hereof it now plainly appeareth what this meaneth, that Christ was made under the law, that he might redeem them which live under the law; for our sakes, for our sakes, I say, and not for his own he performed that, and that of no necessity, but of his great love toward us, and thereby he hath declared both his unspeakable goodness and mercy toward us, being made accursed for us, that he might deliver us from the curse of the law. He willingly made himself subject to the judgment of the law, and did himself bear the sentence pronounced against us, that as many of us as do believe in him, might be free for ever; whereby mark what an incomparable treasure faith bringeth unto thee, whereby thou enjoyest Christ, and all his works, that thou mayest trust unto them no otherwise than if thou thy self hadst done them; for Christ did them not for himself, whom surely they could profit nothing, he having no need of any thing, but by them he laid up the treasure of salvation for us, whereunto we should trust, and being made blessed might enjoy it; with which faith also the spirit of the son cometh, which beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons and heirs of God. What should God now add unto

these?

these? How can a mind hearing these things contain it self, that it should not love God again with a most ardent affection, and be most sweetly delighted in him? What in any wise may come to be done or suffered; which thou wouldst not willingly take upon thee with exceeding joy, and most high praise of God, with a rejoicing and triumphing mind; which mind if thou wantest, it is a certain argument of a faint, or surely a dead faith; for the greater thy faith is, so much more ready also andwilling is thy mind tothose things, which God either sendeth or commandeth. This indeed is the true deliverance from the law, and the damnation of the law, that is, from sin and death, which deliverance cometh to us by Christ; yet not so that there is now no law or death, but that they do not now trouble the believers any thing, that is, they are as though they were not; for the law cannot convince them of sins, neither can death confound them; but by faith they must happily pass from sin and death to righteousness and life. Here Monks, Nuns, &c. were to be exhorted, if there were as yet left any place with them for counsel and admonition, that they would observe their ordinances, ceremonies, prayers, apparel, and such like, as Christ observed the law, by which means surely they should bring unto them no damnation; that is, that they would set the faith of Christ in the first place, and commit the rule of their heart unto him, acknowledging that by that faith only they do obtain righteousness and salvation; and that all their ordinances and works do avail nothing hereunto. Again that they would make themselves subject to them of their own accord, in no other respect than that by them they might serve their neighbours, and subdue the arrogance of the flesh. But now seeing they are occupied in them with hisdouble erroneous opinion, as though they were necessary to salvation and righteousness, and if they did not observe them, they should grievously sin, they are unto them a most certain destruction, nothing but delusion and sin, whereby with their great affliction they draw unto hell, where they shall fully suffer the vexations and torments under the abbat the devil, which being miserable and foolish

fooliſh men they have here begun; for all their life doth utterly diſagree, with the faith of ſons, and that which belongeth only to faith, to wit, to juſtify and ſave us, they attribute to their works; wherefore theſe men cannot both thus ſtick unto their ordinances, and therewith all have faith, which ſuffereth it ſelf to be addicted to no certain works, but that things ſoever the Lord either ſendeth or commandeth, or the neceſſity and need of our neighbour requireth it ſuffereth and doth them with great willingneſs and joy. Theſe he that is indued with faith, counteth his works, having in the mean ſeaſon no regard of maſſes, or faſting, which ſome appoint to certain days, of choice of apparel, of meets, of perſons, of places and ſuch like; yea, he greatly diſallowseth of theſe, inaſmuch as they trouble Chriſtian liberty. Theſe things ſhall ſuffice to have been ſpoken concerning the expoſition of this place of St. Paul, where about the matter itſelf required to ſpend ſo many words, foraſmuch as the nature of faith is ſo unknown; for unleſs thou do well underſtand the nature of faith, thou ſhalt perceive nothing or very little in the writings of St. Paul ver. 6. 'And becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth 'the ſpirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.'

Here we ſee very plainly, that the holy Ghoſt cometh unto the Saints, by no works, but by faith alone, for Paul ſaith, 'And becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent 'forth the Spirit, &c.' Sons believe, when ſervants only work; ſons are free from the law, ſervants are held under the law, as appeareth plainly by thoſe things that are before ſpoken. But how cometh it to paſs that he ſaith, 'Becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the ſpirit,' &c. ſeeing it is before ſaid, that by the coming of the ſpirit we are changed from ſervants, unto the ſtate of ſons, ſo that the ſpirit muſt be firſt ſent unto us, before we are ſons. But here as though we could be ſons before the coming of the ſpirit, he ſaith, 'Becauſe ye are 'ſons, &c.' To this queſtion we muſt anſwer, that St. Paul ſpeaketh here after the ſame ſort that he ſpake before. Before the fulneſs of time came, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the world; all the elect,

elect, which are predestinate of the Lord, that they shall become sons, are counted in the place of sons with God. Therefore he saith rightly, 'Because ye are sons,' that is, because the state of sons is appointed unto you from everlasting, 'God hath sent forth the spirit of his 'Son,' to wit, that he might finish it in you, and make you such as he hath long since of his goodness determined, that he should make you. Moreover he calleth him the Spirit of the Son of God, that he might continue in commending unto us this benefit of God, that he hath chosen us to be sons. For Christ is the Son of God, and that most beloved. Now if the Father give unto us his spirit, he will make us like to his only begotten son, his true sons and heirs, that we may with certain confidence cry with Christ, Abba Father, being his brethren, and fellow heirs with him: where in the apostle surely hath notably set forth the goodness of God, which, maketh us partakers with Christ, and causeth us to have all things common with him, so that we live, and are led by the same spirit. Moreover these words of the apostle do shew, both that the holy Ghost is another from Christ, and yet doth proceed from him, when as he calleth him his spirit. The spirit indeed dwelleth in the godly, and no man will say that he is their spirit, as here St. Paul maketh him the holy spirit of Christ, saying, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son, that is of Christ; for he is the spirit of God, and cometh from God to us, and not ours, unless one will say after this sort, my holy spirit, as we say, my God, my Lord. Wherefore, whereas he is here said to be the holy spirit of Christ, it proveth him to us God, as of whom that spirit is sent, and is peculiarly countedhis spirit.

Furthermore, Christians may perceive by this place, whether they have in themselves the holy Ghost, to wit, this spirit of Sons, whether they hear his voice in themselves; for St Paul saith, that he crieth in the hearts which he possesseth, Abba Father, according as he saith also Rom.viii. 15. 'We have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father.' Now thou

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heareſt this voice, when thou findeſt ſo much faith in thy ſelf, that thou doſt aſſuredly without any doubt, preſume, not only that thy ſins be forgiven thee, but alſo that thou art the beloved Son of God, which being certain of eternal ſalvation, dareth both call him Father, and be delighted in him with a joyful and moſt confident heart; thou muſt be ſo certain hereof, that thou canſt be no more certain of thy life, and muſt ſooner ſuffer death, and heliſh torments, than ſuffer this truſt and confidence to be taken from thee. For to doubt any thing herein were no ſmall reproach, and contumely to the death of Chriſt, as though that had not obtained all things for us, and ought not far more effectually to provoke and encourage us to have a good truſt in God, than all our ſins and temptations are able to put us out of hope and fray us from it. It may be indeed, that thou ſhalt be ſo tempted, that thou ſhalt fear and doubt of thine opinion, and think plainly that God is not a favourable Father, but a wrathful Revenger of ſins, as it fell out with Job and many other Saints, but in ſuch a conflict this truſt and confidence, that thou art a Son ought to prevail and overcome, or elſe thou ſhalt come in miſerable and deſperate eſtate. When one of Cain's brood heareth theſe things, he is as it were beſide himſelf, by reaſon of admiration and aſtoniſhment, fye, ſaith he, away with this arrogancy, and this moſt pernicious error, God turn this mind from me, that I do not preſume to think that I am the Son of God, I am a ſinner, moſt miſerable and wretched, and will never eſteem more of my ſelf. But thou which deſireſt to belong unto Chriſt, flie this kind of men, who are moſt hurtful enemies of Chriſtian faith, and of thy ſalvation. We alſo know that we are ſinners, and miſerably wretched; but here we muſt not weigh or conſider, what we either do, or are, but what Chriſt is, and what he hath done for our ſake. It is not ſpoken more of our nature, but of the grace of God, which ſo far exceedeth our ſins, as heaven is higher than the earth, and the Eaſt is diſtant from the Weſt, as the 103 Pſalm ſaith, Now if it ſeems

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unto thee a great honour, that thou art the Son of God, as indeed it is very great, consider that it is no less marvellous, that the Son of God for this cause did come, was born of a woman, and made under the law, that thou mightest become the Son of God. These are great benefits of God, and do cause in the elect a great trust and confidence in the goodness of God, and a spirit which is afraid of nothing, but is bold and able to do all things. On the contrary, the religion of those of Cain's brood, as it is a thing marvellous strait and careful, so doth it make hearts exceeding fearful, which serve to no use, but are unapt to all things, fit neither to suffer or do any thing, which tremble and are afraid even at the shaking of the leaf of a tree, as it was before spoken of them, Levit. xxvi. Wherefore thou must lay up these words of the apostle well in thy mind, thou must feel this cry of the spirit, which crieth so in the hearts of all the faithful. For how shouldest thou not hear the cry of thine own heart? Neither doth the apostle say, that he doth whisper, speak, yea, or sing, it is greater than all these which the spirit doth in the heart, he crieth out amain, that is, with all the heart. Whereupon it is said, Rom. viii. 'That he maketh intercession for us with groanings whichcannot be uttered 'and that he beareth witness with our spirit, that we are 'the children of God.' How therefore can it be, that our heart should not hear this cry, sighs, and testimony of the spirit? Howbeit hereunto temptation and adversity are very profitable, they move to cry and do exceedingly stir up the spirit; notwithstanding we foolish men do greatly fear and fly the cross, wherefore it is no marvel, if we do never feel the cry of the spirit, and do continually remain like them of Cain's brood. But if thou dost not feel this cry, take heed that thou be not idle and slothful, neither secure, pray instantly, for thou art in an evil case. And yet do not desire, that thou mayest feel nothing but this cry of the spirit thou must feel also another terrible cry made, whereby thou mayest be provoked and urged to this cry of the spirit, which happeneth to all the saints; that is the cry of sins which call most strongly and instantly unto desperation, but

this cry must be overcome of the spirit of Christ, by godly calling upon the Father, and crying for his grace, that the trust and confidence of grace may become greater than desperation. Wherefore this cry of the spirit is nothing else, but to be with all our heart touched with a very strong, firm, and unmoveable trust of most dear sons toward God, as our most tender and favourable Father. Hereby we may see how far a Christian life exceedeth nature, which can do nothing less than trust in God, and call upon him as a Father, but is always afraid, and uttereth a voice which is a witness of exceeding fear. Wo is me, how cruel and intolerable a judge art thou, O God? How heavy is thy judgment unto me? As Cain said, Gen. vi. 13, 14. "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me, shall slay me," &c. This is a terrible and dreadful cry, which is necessarily heard of all such as be of Cain's brood, forasmuch as they trust to themselves and their own works, and put not their trust in the son of God, neither weigh and consider that he was sent of the Father, made of a woman, made under the law, much less that all these things were done for their salvation; they are continually tormented in their own works, the miserable men do in vain go about by them to help themselves, and to obtain the grace of God. And while their ungodliness is not herewith content, it beginneth to persecute even the sons of God; as it is always wont to do, yea, at the last, they grow unto such cruelty, that after their example of the father Cain they cannot rest, until they slay their righteous brother Abel, in whom they do also kill unto themselves Christ. Then the blood of righteous Abel crieth unto heaven against unrighteous Cain, neither ceaseth it to cry until the Lord hath revenged it. He asketh those Cains of their brother Abel, yea, of Christ; but they deny all knowledge of Christ, which labour not to become the sons of God, and heirs by Christ, but to become

come righteous by their own works. In the mean time the blood of Christ continually crieth out against them, even nothing but punishment and vengeance, when as for the elect, it crieth by the spirit of Christ for nothing but grace and reconciliation. The apostle useth here a Syrian and a Greek word, saying, *Abba Pater*. For this word *Abba* in the Syrian tongue signifieth a Father, by which name at this day of the chief of monasteries are wont to be called, and by the same name Hermits in time past being holy men, did call their presidents, at the last by use it was also made a Latin word. Wherefore that which St. Paul saith is as much as Father, Father, or if thou hadst rather, as, my Father. But what is the cause why the apostle doth double the word, Father, that is, the cry of the spirit? I will by your leave bring forth my judgment and opinion hereof. First I think that he would hereby shew the force and straining of this holy cry; for when as we call any with great affection and through necessity, we are wont often to double his name. Now because that sin, and Cain, do always go about with desperation to stop this cry of the spirit for the grace of the Father, it is need surely to cry most strongly, and with a voice both doubled, and exceedingly strained forth, that is, the trust of the grace of the Father ought to be most strong, and not able to be overcome. Again, such is the manner of the scripture, to witness the certainty of a thing, sometime to double or iterate the words, as Joseph did to Pharaoh, Gen. 41. So here also the spirit twice calleth upon the Father, whereby it may shew the certainty of his fatherly favour and grace; for the trust hereof ought to be no less certain, than great and unmoveable. Finally it is meet also to persevere, which again this doubling of the name of the Father doth note unto us: for as soon as we begin to call God Father, Satan with all his band moveth war against us, and omitteth no means to wrest from us this trust of sons toward God our Father, wherefore the word Father must be diligently doubled, that is, our trust and confidence must be confirmed, neither must we ever cease from calling upon this Father, but must most earnestly

continue in this cry of the ſpirit, whereby we may obtain a certain ſure experience of his fatherly goodneſs, by which our truſt in him may be made moſt certain and ſafe; and perhaps St. Paul had reſpect hereunto, when he firſt ſet down *Abba*, which is a word ſtrange to them, to whom he wrote, after adding *Pater*, that is, Father, a familiar word and of their own language, meaning to ſignify hereby, that the beginning of ſo great truſt in God is unaccuſtomed, and even ſtrange unto men, but that when the mind hath a while exerciſed it, and continued in it altho' aſſailed with temptations, it becometh even familiar and almoſt natural, that we now enjoy God as a domeſtic Father, and do in every thing moſt confidently call upon him.

Verſe 7. 'Wherefore thou art no more a ſervant, 'but a ſon, and if a ſon, then an heir of God through 'Chriſt.' Now, ſaith he, that is after the coming of the ſpirit of the ſons, after the knowledge of Chriſt, 'thou 'art not a ſervant.' For as it is ſaid, a ſon and a ſervant are ſo contrary one to another, that the ſame man cannot be both a ſon and a ſervant. A ſon is free and willing, a ſervant is compelled and unwilling; a ſon liveth, and reſteth in faith, a ſervant in works; and ſo by this place alſo it appeareth, that we can obtain no ſalvation of God by works, but before thou workeſt that which is acceptable unto him, it is neceſſary that thou have received of him and poſſeſs ſalvation and all things, that thereupon works may freely flow forth, to the honour of ſo gracious a father, and to the profit of thy neighbours, without any fear of puniſhment, or looking for reward. This, that which St. Paul ſaith, proveth, 'and if a ſon, then an heir.' For it is ſaid, before, that we become the ſons of God by faith, without any works, and therefore heirs alſo, as this place witneſſeth; for by nature they that are ſons, the ſame alſo are heirs. But if this inheritance of the Father be now thine by faith, ſurely thou art rich in all good things, before thou haſt wrought any thing; for how ſhould it be, that by faith thou art the heir of God, without any works through only grace, and that thou mayeſt again firſt merit it by works? Wherefore

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the case standeth as I oftentimes say, To a man that is baptized and believeth in Christ, the heavenly inheritance of the Father is already given at once, that is, all good things, they are only hid as yet by faith, for that he should enjoy them being revealed. Whereupon St. Paul saith, Rom. viii. Ye are saved but by hope, for ye do not as yet see it, but do yet wait, when the possession of your good things shall be revealed. And 1 Pet. i. it is said, Your salvation is reserved in heaven and prepared for you, to be shewed in the last time: Wherefore the works of a Christian ought not to have regard of merit, which is the manner of servants, but only of the use and commodity of his neighbours, that he do not live and work to himself, but to his neighbour, whereby he may truly live to the glory of God. For by faith he is rich in all good things, and truly blessed. Now the apostle addeth, through Christ, lest that any think that so great inheritance cometh unto us freely, and without all cost; for although it be given unto us without our cost, and without all our merit, yet it cost Christ a dear price, who, that he might purchase it for us, was made under the law, and satisfied it for us both by life and also by death. So those benefits which of love we bestow upon our neighbour, do come unto him freely, and without any charges or labour unto him, notwithstanding they cost us something, inasmuch as we bestow upon him, although freely, and of meer goodness, yet those things that are our own, whether it be labour or part of our substance, even as Christ hath bestowed those things that be his upon us. And thus hath St. Paul called back his Galatians from the teachers of works, which preached nothing but the law, perverting the gospel of Christ. All which things are very necessary to be marked of us also; for the pope with his prelates and monks, hath now too long a time with intruding and urging his laws, which are foolish and most pernicious, inasmuch as they do every where disagree with the word of God, seduced almost the whole world from the gospel of Christ and plainly extinguished the faith of sons, according as the scripture

hath in divers places very manifestly prophesied of his kingdom, where let every one that desireth to obtain salvation, most diligently take heed of him and all his apostles, no otherwise than of Satan himself, and his chief and most pernicious apostles.

SERMON XXI.

Of Faith and Diffidence in Danger and Trouble.

Mat. viii. 23, to the 27. *When he was entered into a ship, &c.*

ACcording to the history, this text setteth before us an example of faith and diffidence, whereby we may learn both what a strong and invincible thing faith is, and that it must be exercised and tried even in great matters, and full of peril; and also how desperate a thing on the other side diffidence is, and how full of fear and trembling which can neverdo any thing rightly or well. This doth experience most lively set forth in the disciples; they, when they entered into the ship with Christ, and whilst there was a calm in the lake, were nothing disquieted in mind, neither felt any fear. Then if one should have asked them whether they believed, they would have answered without doubt that they did believe; for they did not know that their heart did trust in that quietness, for that all troubles were absent, and therefore did rest upon a thing visible, and not upon the invisible grace of God; which then was made manifest, as soon as the tempest was risen, and the waves did cover the ship, by and by all their trust and confidence ceased, for that the quietness and calmness whereunto they trusted was taken away, and diffidence, which before, when all things were prosperous, did lurk in their minds, did appear; for this is the nature of diffidence, that it believeth or knoweth no more than it feeleth. Forasmuch therefore as it had

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poſſeſſed the breaſts of the apoſtles, they felt nothing now but the fearful tempeſt, and the waves coveringthe ſhip, they ſawthe ſea ſwelling and greatly raging, threatning nothing but death; theſe things only did they think upon, theſe only did they conſider, and therefore could there be no meaſure or end of fear and trembling in their minds; the more they weighed in their mind the peril, ſo much more were they terrified, and ſeemed now to ſtick in the very jaws of death, hoping for no life or deliverance. And as they could not ſo much as think any thing elſe becauſe of their unbelief, ſo all comfort alſo was far from them; for diffidence or unbelief hath nothing whereunto it may truſt or flee, wherefore when outward adverſity cometh, it admitteth nothing into the mind but it, and therefore it can never feel any peace or quietneſs, while it remaineth. So in hell, where diffidence exerciſeth full tyranny, there can neverbe any intermiſſion of deſperation, trembling and terror. But if the diſciples had been then indued with a ſound faith, and if it had ruledin this danger, if would have removed from the mind the wind and all this tempeſt, and inſtead of theſe would wholly have thought upon the power of God and his grace promiſed, whereunto it would no otherwiſe have truſted, than if it had ſat upon a moſt ſtrong rock, far from the ſea and from all tempeſt; for this is the chief virtue of faith, that it ſeeth thoſe things which are not ſeen or felt, and ſeeth not thoſe things which are felt, yea, which are now fore up on us and do preſs and urge us; as on the contrary, diffidence ſeeth nothing but that which it feeleth. For this cauſe thoſe things are of God laid upon faith, which thewhole world is not able to bear, as ſins, death, the world and the devil, neither ſuffereth he it to be occupied with ſmall matters; for who flieth not death? who is not terrified and overcome by it? Againſt this invincible faith ſtandeth, yea, it couragiouſly ſetteth upon it, which otherwiſe tameth all things, and overcometh and ſwalloweth up that inſatiable devourer of life. So even the wholeworld is not able to bring under and ſubdue the fleſh, but it rather bringeth under and maketh the world ſubject unto it, and beareth rule over

it so that he liveth carnally whosoever is of the world; but faith subdueth this subduer of all other, holdeth it in subjection, and teacheth it not only to be ruled, but also to obey. Likewise who is able to bear the hatred and fury, ignominy, and persecution of the world? who doth not yield unto it, and is oppressed with it? But faith even laugheth at all the iniquity, rage, and fury thereof and maketh that unto itself matter of spiritual joy wherewith others are even killed; it doth no otherwise behave itself against Satan also; who is able to overcome him, which practiseth so many crafts, and coils, whereby he stayeth and hindereth the truth, and word of God, faith and hope, and soweth against them innumerable errors, sects delusions, heresies, desperations, superstitions, and such kind of abominations, without number? all the world is to him as a spark of fire to a fountain of water, it is wholly subdued unto him, in these evils, as (alas) we both see and try; but it is faith which troubleth him, for it is not only not made subject to his delusions but it also discovereth and confoundeth them, that they are no more of any importance, that they are able to do nothing, but do vanish away, as we have experience at this day, by the decaying and vanishing of the papacy and indulgences: Finally, sin hath that force, that that which is even the least, cannot be appeased, or extinguished by any creature, that it doth gnaw and tear the conscience, yea, if all men should go about together to comfort the conscience wherein sin hath begun to live, they should go about it in vain; but faith is that noble champion, which overcometh and extinguisheth every sin, yea, if all the sins which the whole world hath committed from the beginning, were laid upon an heap, it would extinguish and abolish them altogether. Is not faith therefore most mighty, and of incomparable strength, which dareth encounter with so many and mighty enemies, and beareth away the certain victory? Wherefore John saith in his first Epist. chap. v. 4. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' Howbeit this victory cometh not with rest and quietness, we must try the fight

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not without blood and wounds, that is, we must needs feel sin, death, the flesh, the devil, and the world, yea, and that assailing us so grievously, and with so great force, that the heart of man do think that he is past all hope, that sin hath overcome, and the devil gotten the upperhand, and on the contrary, very little feel the force of faith. We see an example of this fight here in the disciples, for the waves did not only strick the ship, but did even cover it, that nothing could be now looked for, but that all should be drowned, especially Christ being asleep, and knowing not of this peril; all hope was then past, life seemed to be overcome, and death appeared to have the victory. But as it fell out with the disciples in this temptation, so also doth it fall out, and must fall out with all the godly, in all kind of temptations, which are of sin, the devil, and the world. In the temptations of sin, we must need feel the conscience, thrall unto sins, the wrath of God, and helish pains to hang over us, and all things to be in that case as though we were past all recovery. Likewise when we have conflicted with the devil, it must appear, as though truth should give place to terror, and Satan should drive the word of God out of the whole world, and he himself reign for a God with his delusions and deceits; neither standeth the case any otherwise when it cometh to pass that we are tried of the world, it must needs be that it should greatly rage, and cruelly persecute us, so that it shall seem that no man is able to stand, that no man is able to obtain safety, or profess his faith; that Cain only shall bear rule, and suffer his brother in no place. But we must not judge according to such feeling and outward appearance of things, but according to faith, the present example ought to stir us up hereunto, and to be received of us instead of special comfort; for we learn hereof, that altho' sins do urge us, death disquiet us, the world rage against us, and the devil lay snares for us, that is although the waves do cover the ship, yet we must not be discouraged; for although thy conscience being wounded doth feel sin, and the wrath and indignation of God, yet shalt thou not therefore be plunged into hell; neither shalt thou therefore die, although

although the whole world do hate and persecute thee, and gape so wide to devour thee, as the morning spreadeth forth itself: They are only waves, which falling upon the ship do terrify thee, and compel thee to cry out, We perish, Lord save us. Thou hast therefore in the former part of this text, the nature of faith set forth, how it is wont and ought to behave itself in temptation, also how desperate a thing diffidence is, and nothing to be counted of; the other part commendeth unto us love in Christ, whereby he was brought so far that he brake off his sleep, arose, and counted the danger that his disciples were in for his own, and helped them freely, asking and looking for nothing of them. Even as it is the nature of Christian love to do all things freely and of good will, to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbours, seeking to itself nothing thereby, for the exercising of which love, man, adopted of God, is left in the earth, that he might for us, as he witnesseth of himself: 'The Son of man came not 'to be ministred unto, but to minister, and to give his life 'a ransom for many,' Mat. xx. 28. [The Allegories of this deed] In this deed Christ hath sent forth the life of Christians, and the state of such as preach and teach the word of God. The ship signifieth the church, the sea the world, the wind the devil, the disciples of Christ are the preachers and godly Christians; Christ the truth the gospel and faith. Now, before that Christ and his disciples enter into the ship, the sea is calm, and the wind quiet, but when Christ with his disciples are entred in, by and by ariseth a tempest. This is that which he said, 'I come not to send peace, but a sword,' Mat. x. 34. For if Christ would suffer the world to live after its own manner, and would not reprove the works thereof, it would be quiet enough; but now seeing that he preacheth that they which are counted wise men, are fools; they that are counted righteous, are sinners; they that are counted rich, are not blessed; but miserable, it rageth and is in great fury. So thou mayest at his day find wise men of this world, which indeed would suffer the gospel to be preached, if the words of the scripture

ſcripture ſhould be ſimply declared, and in the mean ſeaſon the ſtate of eccleſiaſtical perſons not reproved; but as ſoon as thou ſhalt begin to condemn by the ſcriptures all thoſe things which have been hitherto brought in under a falſe name of religion, and teach that they are to be rejected as being of no importance, thou preacheſt ſeditiouſly, and troubleſt the world with unchriſtian doctrine,

But how doth the preſent text pertain unto us? A great tempeſt did ariſe where that ſhip went, wherein Chriſt and his diſciples were. Other ſhips did paſs the ſea quietly, nothing toſſed of the wind, this ſhip only muſt be toſſed and covered with waves, becauſe Chriſt was carried in it; for the world can ſuffer any kind of preaching beſide the preaching of Chriſt. The cauſe is, for that he condemneth all things of the world, and challengeth all righteouſneſs to himſelf, according to that which he ſaith, Mat. xii. 30. 'He that is not with me, 'is againſt me.' And again, The Spirit 'will reprove the 'world of ſin, and of righteouſneſs, and of judgment,' John xvi. 8. He ſaith not, will preach, but will reprove, and not this or that man, but the world, and whoſoever is in the world. Againſt this ſhip of Chriſt all this tempeſt is raiſed, and it is brought into danger; for the world, doth not ſuffer his own things to be condemned, but Chriſt cannot allow them, and if he ſhould allow them, he had come in vain; for if the world were wiſe by itſelf, and did know and follow the truth, what need had there been that Chriſt and his diſciples ſhould preach? Wherefore it is not a ſmall comfort to Chriſtians, eſpecially to preachers, that they are certain before, that as ſoon as they ſhall begin to preach Chriſt to the world, they muſt ſuffer perſecution, and that it cannot be otherwiſe. So that is a ſure ſign, and therefore to be wiſhed, that it is true Chriſtian preaching if it be tried with perſecution, eſpecially of the holy, learned and wiſe men of the world; as it is an undoubted ſign alſo, that is unchriſtian preaching, if it be praiſed commonly and honoured of the world, according to that ſaying, Luke vi. 22. 'Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall hate you, and when they ſhall

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ſeperate you from their company, and ſhall reproach, you, and caſt out your name as evil, for the Son of man's ſake —for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." Now mark how our ſpiritual men do behave themſelves, and of what ſort their doctrine is: They have got into their ſubjection the riches, glory, and power of the world, and they that praiſe them, enjoy the honour and pleaſures thereof, their caſe in all things agreeth with the caſe of the falſe prophets, and yet they dare boaſt themſelves to be preachers and teachers of Chriſt, and worſhippers of God. The next thing whereby this deed doth comfort and encourage the preachers of Chriſt, is that it ſheweth where help is to be asked when a tempeſt is riſen; to wit, not of the world, for not man's wiſdom or power, but Chriſt himſelf, and he alone is able to help them. Him they muſt call upon in every diſtreſs with full confidence; in him they muſt truſt, as his diſciples here did, for unleſs they had believed that Chriſt was able to take away the danger wherein they were they would not have awaked him, and prayed him to ſave them; although their faith then was very weak, and very much diffidence was in them, for that they did not confidently commit themſelves with him unto danger, doubting nothing but he was able to deliver them out of the midſt of the ſea, and from death itſelf. Hereof therefore let it be acknowledged as certain, that as no judge or moderator can be given to the word of God, but God only, ſo there can be had no other maintainer or defender thereof; who as he ſendeth it out whither he will, without any merit or council of men, ſo he alone alſo will defend and preſerve it without the aid or ſtrength of men; and therefore he that ſeeketh aid unto this word of men, ſhall without doubt fall, being forſaken as well of men as of God. Whereas Chriſt did ſleep, it giveth us to underſtand that in the time of perſecution he doth ſometimes withdraw himſelf, and ſeemeth as though he ſlept, whilſt that he giveth not ſtrength valiantly to reſiſt, the peace and tranquility of mind being now diſturbed, but ſuffereth us to wreſtle and labour with our infirmity for a while, that we may acknowledge how we are altogether nothing, and that

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all things do depend upon his grace and power, as Paul confesseth of himself, 2 Cor. 1. that it behoved that he should be so prest and troubled out of measure, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the deed. Such sleep of God David oftentimes felt, and maketh mention thereof in many places: 'Arise, awake, O Lord: Why sleepest thou? Why dost 'thou forget us?' &c. In fine, the present text offereth unto us two principal things, full of confidence and godly boldness. The first, that when persecution is risen for the word of God, we may say, We knew that it would so come to pass. Christ is the ship, therefore the sea so rageth, the winds trouble us, the waves fall upon us as though they would drown us; but let them rage and be furious as much as they may, it is certain the sea and the winds do obey Christ, which is the other principal thing which this text offereth. Persecution shall extend no farther, nor rage any longer then he will, and altho' the waves do even overwhelm us, yet must they be obedient at his beck. He is Lord over all, wherefore nothing shall hurt us, he only endues us with his grace, that we be not overcome by unbelief, and so despair. Whereas the men marvelled and praised the Lord, as unto whom the sea and winds do obey, it signifieth that the gospel and word of God is so far from being extinguished by persecution, that thereby it is spread farther abroad, and faith also is increased and becometh stronger. Whereinit appeareth howdiversthe nature of this divine good thing is from the good things of the world, which decay by calamity and misfortune, and are increased by prosperity and fortunate affairs: But the kingdom of Christ is increased and strengthned by tribulation and adversity, but is diminished and weakned by peace and tranquility. Whereupon Paul saith, 2 Cor. xii 9. 'My strength is made perfect in weakness;' which God perform in us also. *Amen.*

SER.

SERMON XXII.

Of the Life of a Christian.

2 Cor. vi. 1. to the 10. *We then are workers together with him, &c.*

THis is an admonition and exhortation to the Corinthians, to apply themselves to those things, which they did already know. The words sure are easy to be understood but hard to be done, and in use most rare; for in such marvellous order and colours he painteth out Christian life, as it cannot be pleasant to the flesh to behold. First he saith, 'We then as workers together 'with him, beseech you.' He calleth theministers ofthe word workers together, as 1 Cor. iii. 9. he also saith, 'We are labourers together with God;ye areGod's hus-'bandry, ye areGod's bulding.' Which is thus must in effect: We preach and labour in theword among you by teachingand exhorting,butGod inwardly with the Spirit doth bless and give the increase,lestthat the outward labour in theword be in vain; and soGod is the inward and truemaster,which bringeth to pass all things, whom we serve in the office of outward preaching. Now he calleth himself and his fellows, workers together,lest they should contemn the outward word, as though they either had not need of it, or had already sufficiently attained to the knowledge thereof; for though God can only by his Spirit,without the outward word, work all things in the minds of the elect, yet he will not do it, but rather will use together working preachers, and work by their word when and where it pleaseth him. Forasmuch therefore as it seemeth good unto God to give to preachers this office,name and dignity, that they becounted workerstogetherwith him,it is not lawful for anyman to challenge either that learningor holinessunto himself, that he neglect even never so simple a sermon wherein the word of God is preached, much less that he

he contemn it; for we know not when that time will come, when God by his preacher will vouchsafe to accomplish his work in us. Secondly, the Apostle admonisheth of the danger of losing the light of the gospel, when he saith, 'That ye receive not the grace of God in 'vain.' Whereby he giveth us to understand, that the preaching of the gospel is not a perpetual, continuing and permanent doctrine, but rather that it is like rain that suddenly cometh and soon passeth away, when the sun and heat come by and by, and take away all the moisture that is left thereof, and afterward scorch and hurt things. This very experience proveth, for no man shall be able to bring forth even one place in the world, where the gospel hath remained pure and sincere above the age of one man, but continued and increased while those lived, by whose ministry it began, they departing, that also almost wholly departed, and by and by after followed heretics and false teachers, with their delusions and false doctrine, perverting and corrupting all things; so Moses foretold his Israelites that by and by after his death it should come to pass, that they should depart from the way of the Lord and corrupt their own ways, which the book of Judges witnesseth to have come to pass. Moreover the same book saith, that as often as any Judge which had called again the word of the Lord, did die, they fell again forthwith to their ungodliness, and made all things worse and worse; so Joash the king continued in his duty so long as Jehoada the priest lived, who being dead, he began by and by to be a king unlike himself, and left the office of a good and godly king. Neither fell it out otherwise after Christ had received his apostles to himself, almost the whole world was filled with heresies and false doctrines which Paul pronounced before, Acts xx. 29. 'I know 'this, saith he, that after my departing shall grievous wolves 'enter in among you, not sparing the flock, &c. So standeth the case at this day also, the pure and sincere gospel, hath shined unto us, the day of grace and salvation, and the acceptable time are present but they shall shortly be ended if the world stand. To receive grace

grace in vain can be nothing else than to hear the pure and sincere word of God, whereby the grace of God is preached and offered, and notwithstanding, embrace it with no deligence, neither be changed or altered in life. By this unthankful slothfulness we deserve to have it taken away again as being unworthy of it; for we making so light of the gospel are undoubtedly they which are bidden and called to the marriage, but whilst being busied about other matters we despise this grace, the good man of the house is angry with us, and sweareth that he will never taste of his supper. The same doth Paul now here admonish of, that we take heed to ourselves, lest that we receive the gospel unthankfully and without fruit; yea, Christ also admonished us of the same, John xii. 25. 'Walk while ye have the light, lest 'darkness come upon you.' It ought surely to make us more wary and heedful, even for that we suffered sogrievous and pernicious darkness under the Pope; but we have now forgotten all such things, no thankfulness, no amendment is found among us; which how greatly to our own heart we neglect, we shall shortly feel: 'For he 'saith, I have heard thee in the time accepted, and in the 'day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is 'the accepted time.' He discribeth here the marvellous felicity which is there where the gospel flourisheth, there is no wrath, no revengement, all things are repleni shed with grace and salvation, yea, it is unspeakable how great felicity these words, do speak of. Where he first saith a time accepted, it is spoken by an Hebrew figure, and is as much as thou say, A gracious time and repleni shed with the favour of God; wherein God turneth away his anger, and declareth nothing but love toward us, and a ready will to help us. Our sins are blotted out, not only those that be past, but those also which as yet stick in our flesh, and that I may speak in a word, the kingdom of mercy is present, wherein nothing but forgiveness of sins, and restoring of grace is shewed; heaven standeth open, the right year of jubilee is come, wherein all debts are remitted, and no grace is denied. Whereuponhe saith, 'I have heard thee in a time accepted;' that is,

is, now I favour thee and am merciful unto thee, whatsoever thou wilt have, pray for it, and thou shalt obtain it, and certainly receive it; only let not the fault be in thyself, pray while this time endureth. 'Behold, 'now is the day of salvation.' He calleth this the time and day of salvation, that is, of help and felicity; for we are not only certain hereof, that God is merciful and favourable unto us, and we acceptable unto him, but also, as we believe, and by faith are sure of his goodness towards us, so he declareth indeed, heareth them that cry unto him, helpeth and saveth them, yea, and maketh them plainly blessed. We therefore worthily acknowledge and confess this time to be the wished, prosperous, happy, and very day of salvation; for it behoveth that both be together, both that God favour us, and also that he declare his favour towards us by work or deed, That he favoureth us, the accepted time which is now our salvation, this other witnesseth viz. the day of salvation the day of help. But as the state of the life of Christians is, if thou wilt judge according to the outward man, thou wilt judge it rather a time of affliction, wrath and indignation, wherein the gospel is preached, and wherein they live, than a time of grace and salvation; wherefore the words of the Spirit must be spiritually understood, so shall we easily see and perceive, that these noble and most pleasant names do most rightly and properly belong to the time wherein the gospel flourisheth; that it is a time accepted, that is full of grace, and a time of salvation, whereby freely all the riches and felicity of Christ's kingdom are notably commended and set forth unto us. 'Giving 'no offence in any thing.' Forasmuch therefore as there is so acceptable and gracious a time, let us, saith he, use it worthily, and not receive it in vain. First, endeavouring to give no occasion of offence to any man, least that our office of preaching Christ be reprehended, whereby he sufficiently declareth what offence he meaneth, namely, that the doctrine of the gospel may not be stumbled at, as though he taught that

which is not perfect and sound. Now there may be given a double occasion of offence, whereby the gospel is reprehended; one, whereby the heathen are offended, when as some under the pretence of the gospel, seek the liberty of the flesh, will not be obedient to Magistrates, turning the liberty of the spirit, into fleshly licentiousness. These do marvellously offend the discreet and wise sort of the heathen, so that they hate the gospel without a cause, which they think doth teach this licentiousness: and as it were with a certain force they do by this their insolence repel and drive them from the faith of Christ; for they measuring all Christians by these, do detest them as light of men, and troublers of the common-wealth, and therefore not to be suffered. This offence therefore, and this reprehension, or rather hatred and persecution of the gospel we acknowledge to come through these prepostrous Christians. Another offence is, whereby even Christians among themselves are sometimes offended through the unseasonable use of all Christian liberty, in meats and other indifferent things, whereat the weaker sort in faith do sometimes stumble, whereof the apostle hath given many precepts, 1 Cor. viii. Rom. xiv. He exhorteth therefore here unto that, whereof he admonisheth in other words 1 Cor. x. 32 So behave yourselves, that ye 'give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles 'nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in 'all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of 'many, that they may be saved.' The same he teacheth also Philip. ii. that every man look not on his own things, but on the things of other men, so all offence should be easily taken away, nay, none at all should be given. 'That the ministry be not blamed.' Who can bring to pass, that our ministry shall not be blamed, seeing that the gospel is necessarily subject to persecution, no less than Christ himself? Indeed it is not in us to make that the word of God be not blamed and persecuted of them which are ignorant of God, and do not believe; for it is a rock of offence, Isaiah viii. Rom. ix. this offence cometh because of our faith, and cannot

cannot be avoided of us, and therefore the blame thereof ought not to be laid upon us. Howbeit there is another offence which proceedeth hereof, for that our love is not sufficient dutiful, this cometh through us, inasmuch as our works are the cause thereof, because they do not so shine by faith, that they which are conversant with us, may thereby be provoked to serve God, as it is meet. This offence is given through our fault, whom it becometh so to live, that the Jews, Heathen and princes of the world might have no occasion to say, Behold how light and naughty these men are, yea, and very wicked wretches, the doctrine of life, which they follow must needs be evil and pestilent. So our infamy and crimes are occasion of offence to others, and of hatred and detestation of the most holy word of God. For whereas we ought so to know, preach and follow it, that thereby both our neighbours might be brought unto God, and to the leading of a godly life, and also the glory of God set forth, so we by our naughty and slothful life bring to pass, that it doth not only bring no profit and advantage to our neighbours, but is brought into hatred and made detestable through our means, bearing our ignominy and reproach. Now it is a most horrible sin and wickedness by our naughtiness to make the word of God which is most holy and bringeth salvation, to make it, I say so odious, and to repel and drive men from it to our own, and their most certain destruction.

'But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions,' &c. Here he describeth in order the signs and proper tokens of a Christian life wherewith it ought to be adorned in outward conversation; Not meaning that one is made a Christian and godly hereby, but as he saith, that by these as by proper fruits and figures of Christianity, we should shew ourselves to be both, and behave ourselves as the ministers of God, that is as Christians and godly men; and mark well that he saith; 'as the ministers of 'God.' It may seem very strange, that the ministry of God consisteth in these, in 'afflictions, in necessi-

' ties, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, ' in labours, in watchings, in fastings,' &c. Among these he numbreth not masses, and prayers for the dead, or other trifles of feigned worship of God. He rehearseth those things that pertain to the true and right service of God, whereby the body is chastised, and the flesh tamed. Which is well to be noted, lest that any neglect fastings, watchings and labour, and make no account of them for that they do not justify. They bring not righteousness indeed, yet are they fruits of righteousness being obtained, wherein thou mayest be exercised, and whereby thou mayest keep thy flesh in subjection, and inforce it to do his duty. ' In tumults.' He rehearseth tumults or seditions among the rest, not that it becometh us to teach or move them, who ought to obey magistrates, and with quietness to live obedient unto all in that which is good, as St. Paul teacheth, Rom. xiii. and Christ, Mat. xxii. ' Give unto Cæsar those things that ' are Cæsar's:' But that we must bear tumults of others, as also necessities, distresses, stripes, and imprisonments, which we must cause or procure unto none, but suffer being procured and laid upon us by others. Wherefore in the first place he setteth much patience, which surely moveth no sedition or tumult, but rather suffereth it, and appeaseth it if it can. But in the mean time, it singularly comforteth us at this time, when as tumults are commonly imputed unto us, for that this is incident to a Christian life, that for the preaching of the gospel it is accused to raise sedition, which it rather suffereth being raised of others against the word of God; for as in time past Achab accused the most holy prophet Elias of sedition, affirming that it was he that troubled Israel, when as he himself indeed did trouble it; so is it neither a shameful nor new thing, for us to be accused of the same, when we preach the same word. Let us think when the enemies of God lay this reproach and slander upon us, that not only Elias, not only the apostles, but Christ himself was counted of the Jews a seditious fellow, and crucified, a title being written in three languages and put on the cross, that he should of

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all be counted a seditious king of the Jews, which would have moved that people against Cæsar, and adjoined them unto himself, who indeed by word and example of his life, taught nothing more than submission and obedience, and lived so that he was ready to profit and minister unto all. As for the rest whereof the apostles here maketh mention, as patience, affliction, necessity, distress, stripes, prisons, labour, watchings, fastings, purity; it is easy to understand how they pertain to the ministry of God, who truly disdaineth to have slothful, idle, gluttonous, and drowsy ministers, and such as cannot abide adversity and trouble. But he especially proveth our delicate ones, which quietly enjoy revenues and rents, and take their delight and pleasure, thinking that it is an unworthy thing, that they should labour, for they are shaven, wear long gowns, and cry out in temples, &c. Howbeit these shall not be able to approve themselves before God, who will have all to labour, and eat their own, and not other mens bread, as it is written by St. Paul to the Thessalonians Who therefore teacheth here also, that God is served by labour, and not that only, but that we also are thereby proved and commended to be the ministers of God.

'By knowledge.' St. Paul taketh knowledge here for that which we call here prudence or wisdom, whereby we use things with reason, behaving ourselves with discretion and comelinesse; of which knowledge the saying also of St. Paul, Rom. x. 2. is understood, 'They have a 'zeal of God, but not according to knowledge,' that is, they bear a zeal, to the law not prudently, not weighing and considering all things well, that they might do no undecent thing, wherefore he here expressly requireth knowledge in the ministry of God, thereby admonisheth us, that we frame our life with reason, and order it prudently, in all things keeping a mean, and having an advised regard of our neighbours, lest that in any thing we offend the weaker sort, with unseasonable use of Christian liberty, and that we do all things to the edifying of all; so we must labour, fast, watch, and apply ourselves, to chastity,

and such other things not above measure that either the body may be in danger by too much hunger and watching, or the true purity of life by overmuch abstinence from matrimonial company, but we must use these things with knowledge, that is, with convenient wisdom and discretion, that they may not any whit hurt, but always edify. Whereupon St Paul, 1 Cor. vii. expressly admonisheth married folks, that they abstain not overmuch from mutual company least that they be tempted of Satan. In all these therefore, in fastings, watchings, labours, chastity, &c. the apostle would prescribe and appoint no rule, law, or measure, which the councils of the pope and monks do, but the mean or measure to be observed in them he left free to every man's knowledge and discretion, that every one may consider with himself how much or long he must labour, fast, watch or abstain, to this end, that the flesh may be tamed and made obedient to the spirit. 'By 'long suffering, by kindness, by the holy Ghost.' What the two former are, the apostle hath sufficiently declared, Rom ii. Gal v. But whereas he saith, By the holy Ghost, it may be understood after two sorts, either that he speaketh of the holy Ghost, God himself, or that he meaneth by the holy Spirit, the true force and manner of a spiritual life, as though he would admonish in this manner; Beware of an hypocritical spirit, which will be counted for a holy spirit thro' a marvellous shew and crafty counterfeiting of spiritual things, when it is indeed an unclean, prophane, and evil spirit, and bringeth in nothing but Sects and Heresies. But live ye in the true and holy spirit which is given of God, which giveth and maintaineth unity, one mind, heart and affection, whereof he speaketh also, Eph. iv. 3. 'Endeavouring to keep 'the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' They therefore which persevere in the same true faith, mind and sentence behave themselves as the ministers of God in the holy spirit, being truly spiritual life, which is led by the assistance of the holy spirit of God, is also led in the unity of minds, the hearts by faith being affected after the

the same manner. 'By love unfeigned, By the word of 'truth.' As he set the holy spirit against heretics and false prophets, so he setteth unfeigned love against slothful and sluggish Christians, who altho' they have the same meaning and mind in the true spiritual like, as concerning opinions of doctrine, yet are they remiss, cold and feint in love; so he setteth the word of truth against them which abuse the word of God, and interpret it according to their own affections, that thereby they may get them a name and profit; for as false spirits do contemn the word of the scripture, and prefer themselves before it; so these do indeed boast of the word, and will be counted masters of the scripture, but by their interpretations do pervert the sense and meaning thereof. Against these Peter speaketh, 'If any man speak, let him speak as 'the oracles of God,' that is, let them take heed that he be certain that those words which he speaketh, be the words of God, and not his own vain imagination. Now St. Paul calleth that the word of truth, which is the sincere word of God, not which is in sincere and feigned, which forasmuch as it is ours, is falsly called the word of God. For that which we call the true and right word, the Hebrews call the word of truth.

'By the power of God.' Of this power St. Peter also speaketh, 1 Pet. iv. 11. 'If any man minister, let him do 'it as of the ability which God giveth.' And St. Paul Colos. i. 29. 'Whereunto I also labour striving according 'to his working, which worketh in me mightily.' Again Rom. xv. 18. 'I will not dare to speak of any of those 'things, which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the 'Gentiles obedient, &c.' Christians must be certain that they are the kingdom of God, and do nothing at all, especially in spiritual functions, and those things that pertain to the salvation of souls, whereof they are not certain, that it is not they which work, but God that worketh by them. For in the kingdom of God it is meet, that God alone do speak, command, do, dispose and work all things. This Christ meant when he said, Mat. v. 16. 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see 'your good works, and glorify your Father which is in

'heaven,' as the author of them, which doth them and not you, 'By the armour of righteousness, on the right hand, 'and on the left. By honour and dishonour, &c.' This armour he describeth more at large in the epistle to the Ephesians and Thessalonians; he rehearseth there the girdle of verity, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shoes of preparation to preach the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, &c. This armour of righteousness, he calleth in his epistle to the Ephesians, the armour of God, both are to this end, that he may turn Christians from corporal and prophane armour, and admonish them, that they are a spiritual people, and therefore must be furnished with spiritual armour, wherewith they must always fight a spiritual fight with spiritual enemies, which here he rehearseth, and sheweth that they do assail us both on the right hand and on the left. On the left hand he setteth dishonour, evil report, and that we are counted as deceivers, unknown, dying, chastened, sorrowing, poor having nothing. For all these things come unto Christians, they are openly defamed, being reproached to their face, and by infamy falsly accused and railed on, counted as deceivers and followers of most wicked trades. They are as unknown, although noble, all refusing to be friends with them, because of the perilous confession of the name of Christ, yea, it many times cometh to pass, that they that were their most familiar friends are ashamed of them, for that they have so evil a report, and are very ill spoken of among the chief, richest, wisest, and mightiest of the world. they are dying, that is, as sheep appointed to the slaughter, they look for death every moment, by reason of the great hatred and envy which the evil bear toward them, being always persecuted of the chief of the world. They are chastised, for it often times falleth out, that they are stricken and beaten, and do by other disadvantages try how they are envied of the world, and how great indignation the mighty of the world bear against them. They are as sorrowing, for all outward things are against them, and the whole world giveth many causes of griefs unto them; they are as

poor,

poor, for there is no man of the world which will give them any thing, every man is ready to hurt and endamage them; neither do they possess any thing, for altho' all things be not taken from them at once, yet are they in that state, that they daily look for it; against these adversities and as enemies assailing us on the left hand, it is needful, that we be fortified and fenced with the armour of God, lest, that we either despair or faint. Now this armour is a sure and invincible faith, continual consolation and exhortation of the word of God, and a lively hope and undoubted expectation of the help of God. When being furnished with these, we suffer all things patiently, standing stedfast in our duties, we declare ourselves the sincere ministers of God, which the false apostles and hypocrites can never do altho' they feign that they serve God.

On the right hand he setteth glory, praises, that we are counted true, known, do live, are not killed, do rejoice, enriching many, possessing all things; for it always falleth out, that there be some which make account of Christians, and reverence them, among whom they are well reported of, and counted true in doctrine, wherefore some are not wanting which join themselves unto them, and do openly pretend friendship with them, freely pronouncing them to be the ministers of God: neither do they die so oft as they are brought into danger, and being chastened are not always killed. Finally, it cometh to pass by the consolation of the spirit, that they do then most of all rejoice, when they are in greatest affliction; for their heart rejoiceth in God, which joy bursteth forth, and uttereth itself in words, works, and gestures. And altho' they be poor in temporal substance, yet are they never famished with hunger, but with the word of God, do enrich very many in spirit, and stand not in need of any thing, although they have nothing, for all things are in their hands, for that all creatures must serve the believers, as Christ saith; to him that believeth all things are possible. These things altho' they be the excellent gifts of God, notwithstanding if the fear of God should be absent, even they should be turned into enemies unto us, and there-

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fore it is needful thatwe be ſtrongly fenced againſt them with the armour of God, leſt that they make us wax proud, or inſolently puff us up A Chriſtian man therefore is marvellouſly free, and delights in nothing but God alone, he ſetteth God only before his eyes, he endeavoureth to come ſtraight unto him by this middle and high way, between thoſe things which aſſail on the right hand and on the left, ſo that he is neither thrown down by adverſity, nor puffed up by proſperity, but uſeth both moſt rightly, both to the glory of God and profit of his neighbours; we muſt, ſaith the apoſtle, live ſuch a life, while it is the time of grace and of the lively light of the goſpel, leſt that while this day ſhinneth we work not, and ſo have ſhined unto us in vain. This is the true miniſtry ofGodwhich only healloweth, wherein he grants that we may ſerve him, and that moſt dutifully, *Amen.*

SERMON XXI.

Of Temptation.

Matth. iv. 1. to the 11th. *Then was Jeſus led up of the Spirit into the wilderneſs to be tempted, &c.*

THIS text hath therefore been appointed to be read in the beginning of the ſolemn faſt which hath hitherto been commanded for forty days, that the example of Chriſt being commended to Chriſtians, they might thereby be provoked to keep that faſt ſo much more religiouſly, which ſurely was nothing but a vain trifle. Firſt, for that no man is able to follow the example of Chriſt, who lived without any meat, forty days and ſo many nights, Chriſt rather followed the example of Moſes herein, than gave unto us any example to follow. Moſes received the law, was forty days and forty nights in mount Sinai without meat, ſo long time would Chriſt alſo faſt, coming to bring and publiſh a new law. Again, this faſting is a perverſe thing, inaſmuch

asmuch as it was ordained of men. For altho' Christ fasted forty days, yet have we no word of his, whereby he hath commanded us also to do the same. He did many other things besides, notwithstanding he will not have us also to do them; those things that he hath commanded us to do, those things, I say, we must endeavour to do, that thereby we may obey his will; but the most pestilent thing of all herein was, that we took upon us, and used fasting as a good and meritorious work, not to tame the flesh thereby, but to satisfy for sins, and to procure the favour of God unto our selves; which wicked opinion made our fasting so foul, filthy, and abominable before God, that no feastings, banquets, gluttonny, and drunkenness are so filthy and detestable before him, and it were better to drink and bib day and night, than so to fast; and although their ungodly and wicked intent had not defiled our fasting but that it had been ordained for chastising the body, nevertheless, forasmuch, as it was not left free, that every one might have taken it upon him of his own accord, but it was inforced by the laws of man, so that most which fasted, fasted against their wills, and with a grudging mind, it could not be but vain and unacceptable to God. I speak not what other hurt it did to women with child, in young children, in the weak and aged. Wherefore we will more rightly consider this text, and see what manner of fasting it teacheth by the example of Christ. The scripture commendeth unto us two sorts of fasting which are laudable: one, which is taken upon us of our own accord, to name the flesh, whereof the apostle speaketh, 2 Cor. vi where he exhorteth us to behave ourselves as the ministers of God, by labours, watchings, and fastings among the rest. Another, which indeed is not taken upon us willingly, yet is willingly born of us, when by reason of need and poverty we have not whereon to feed: whereof St. Paul speaketh also in the first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. iv. 'Even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst.' And Christ, Matt. ix 'When the Bridegroom shall be taken from 'them, then shall they fast.' This fasting Christ teacheth us

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by his present example, who being alone in the desart, and having no meat, did suffer hunger and need patiently. The first of these two fasts may when we please be left and broken with eating of meat; but this last must be suffered until the Lord end and break it. Now the cause why the evangelist did so diligently first declare, that Jesus was led up of the spirit into the wilderness, that he should there fast and be tempted, is this; lest that any taking upon him to fast of his own mind, and for his own profit sake, should in vain endeavour to follow this example of Christ; for he must look for the leading up of the spirit, he will cause fasting and temptation enough: for he that without the leading of the spirit, should voluntarily bring himself into danger of hunger, or any other temptation, when by the blessing of God, he hath what to eat and drink, and whereby to live quietly, he, I say, should plainly tempt the Lord. We must not procure to our selves poverty and temptation, they will come soon enough of themselves, only when they are sent of the Lord, we must endeavour to bear them patiently; Jesus, as the evangelist writeth, 'was led up of the spirit into 'the wilderness,' he did not chuse to himself the wilderness; they are led with the spirit of God, which are the sons of God, Rom. viii. The good things which the Lord giveth, he giveth for this, that we may enjoy them with thanksgiving, not that we should neglect them, tempting him. Moreover, this history is written unto us both to instruct, and also to exhort; to instruct, that we may learn hereby, that Christ by this his fasting, hunger, temptation and victory against Satan did serve us, and furthered our salvation; that whosoever believeth in him, may never need, or be hurt by any temptation, but rather shall abound with good things in the midst of poverty, and be safe in the midst of temptation, for that his head and Lord Christ hath overcome all these things for him, whereof by faith he is most certain, according as the Lord himself saith, John xvi. 33. 'Be ye of good cheer, I have overcome the 'world.' And if God could without meat nourish his

Christ

Christ forty days and so many nights, so he can also Christians; we are exhorted also here, that according to this example of Christ, we suffer hunger, temptation, and other necessities when they come, and when the case so requireth, to the glory of God and profit of our neighbours, and surely if we do earnestly confess and stick to the word of God, these things will undoubtedly come unto us. The present text therefore containeth a marvellous consolation and strengthening of faith against the filthy and incredulous belly, which being diligently and faithfully weighed, our conscience shall be very much comforted and strengthened, that we may not be careful for living, but trust with a full confidence, that God will give us plentifully those things that be necessary. Now, that this temptation also is incident unto it is manifest; for as Christ was led aside into the wilderness, that is, was left alone of God, angels, men, and all creatures, which might help him; so also it falleth out with us; we are led up into the wilderness, we are forsaken and left alone; and this indeed is it, which especially grieveth us, to feel or perceive nothing whereunto we may trust, or from whence we may look for help; as when it lieth upon me to prepare sustenance for me and mine, and I have nothing at all of myself, neither perceive any help coming from any man, neither know where to look for any. This is to be led up into the desart, and to be left alone, I being in this case, am in the true exercise of faith, then I learn how I myself am nothing, how weak my faith is, how great and rare a thing found faith is, and how deep abominable incredulity is settled in the hearts of all. But he that hath as yet a purse heavy with money, a cellar full of wine, a garden replenished with grain, he is not yet led up into the wilderness, or left alone, and therefore cannot feel temptation while these things remain. Secondly, Satan cometh, and tempteth Christ with this care for the belly, and diffidence of the goodness of God, saying, 'If thou be the son of God, command that 'these stones be made bread,' as if he should say according to the Dutch proverb, Trust in God, and in the

the mean time neglect to bake bread, tarry till a roasted chicken fly into thy mouth. Go now and say that thou hast a God, who is careful for thee; where is now thy heavenly Father, who hath so great a care of thee? Hath he not goodlily forsaken thee? Eat now and drink of thy faith, and let us see how thou shalt be sufficed; it were well with thee, if thou couldst feed on stones; what a goodly son of God art thou? How fatherly doth he behave himself toward thee? He sendeth thee not so much as a piece of bread, but suffereth thee here to be pined with hunger. Go now, and believe yet that thou art the son of God, and he thy Father. Surely with these and such like cogitations he tempteth all the children of God, which Christ also undoubtedly felt, for he was not a block or stone, but every man, although pure from sin, as he also continued, which is not given unto us. Now that the devil tempted Christ with care of the belly, diffidence and wicked desire, the answer of Christ doth sufficiently declare: 'Man liveth not by bread alone:' which is as much as if he had said: thou wilt have me have regard to bread alone, thou dealest with me, as though I ought to have no other care but of meat and food for the belly. This temptation is very common, even among men that are of the most perfect sort, but they especially feel it, which when they are poor, have notwithstanding a wife and children to nourish and maintain, and therewithal an empty house. Hereupon St. Paul called covetousness the root of all evils, for that it is the right offspring of diffidence; and what thing else, but this diffidence and care of the belly, is the cause that many are so loath to marry? What else doth hold so many thousand men in whoredom and unchaft living, and detaineth them from matrimony, but this immoderate care of the belly, and ungodly fear, lest they should be pined and perish with hunger? But the present deed and example of Christ should be thought upon, who although he had been without meat forty days and so many nights, yet was he not quite forsaken and left destitute. But the angels at the last came, and ministred all things necessary

neceſſary unto him. Thirdly, we may ſee here how Chriſt meeteth with this temptation of the belly, and overcometh it. He ſeeth nothing indeed but ſtones, and that which cannot be eaten, therefore from thoſe things that were before his eyes he removeth his mind to the word of God, thereby both ſtrengthening himſelf, and overthrowing the devil. On which word Chriſtians, eſpecially when poverty preſſeth them, and all things ſeem to be turned into ſtones, and the mind doth now tremble for fear of hunger, ought with a ſtrong faith to lay hold, and anſwer the temptation that would quite diſcourage them: what if the whole world were full of bread? yet doth not man live by bread alone, there is need of another thing, that is, of the word of God. Now foraſmuch as theſe words are of marvellous force and efficacy, we muſt a little ſtand upon them, and endeavour to declare them, and not lightly paſs them over. Theſe words therefore Chriſt took out of the fifth book of Moſes, Deut viii. 3. where Moſes ſpeaketh thus unto the Iſraelites: The Lord thy God 'he humbled thee, and 'ſuffereth thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna '(which thou kneweſt not, neither did thy fathers know) 'that he might make thee know, that man doth not live 'by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out 'of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live' Which is as much as if he had ſaid, Whereas he ſuffered thee to hunger, and yet thou didſt not periſh, thou mayeſt thereby eaſily know that it is God which ſuſtaineth thee by his word, even without bread; for if we did live and were nouriſhed by bread alone, it were neceſſary that we ſhould be always filled with bread; but it is the word of God that nouriſheth us, which he will have preached, that we may know that he is our God, and that he will ſhew himſelf bountiful and gracious unto us. We are taught therefore, by this anſwer of Chriſt, and teſtimony of Moſes, that he which believeth in the word of God, ſhall undoubtedly have experience of two things. Firſt, that when meat is wanting, and he is pinched with hunger, he is well ſuſtained and ſtrengthened by this word, that he die not or periſh with hunger, as if he might abundantly enjoy meat; this word of God, which he

he obtaineth in heart, nouriſhing and ſtrenthening him without meat and drink; and if he have but a little meat, he ſhall perceive that little, although it were but even one piece of bread, to feed and nouriſh him no leſs than if he did enjoy princely fare; for not by bread, but by the word of God the body is nouriſhed and preſerved, like as by it it was made, as alſo all other things, like as by the word they were created, ſo alſo by it are they preſerved. The other thing, which we are here taught that the believer ſhall have experience of, is, that at the length he ſhall aſſuredly receive bread, from whencefoever it come, yea, although it ſhould rain down from heaven, as manna did to the Iſraelites, in a place where no other bread could be gotten. Let a Chriſtian quietly promiſe to himſelf and look for theſe two things, his hope cannot be fruſtrate, either he ſhall have in hunger ſomewhat to eat from whencefoever it be given him, or his hunger ſhall be made ſo tolerable unto him, that he ſhall be no leſs fed than if he were fed with bread, the power of the word of God nouriſhing and ſuſtaining him. Thoſe things that I have ſaid of bread, that is, of meat, are alſo to be underſtood of drink, apparel, houſe, and all things neceſſary unto this life. It may be indeed that a godly man do need apparel, or an houſe, &c. but at legth he ſhall have them; the leaves falling from the trees ſhall ſooner be turned into coats and cloaks, than we can be left naked, or ſurely thoſe garments which we have ſhall not wax old, which the Iſraelites tried, whoſe clothes and ſhoes in the deſart were not torn, as alſo a moſt wide wilderneſs was unto them inſtead of houſes, places unpaſſable paſſable, unwatry watry, finally, the ſtony rocks fountains of water; for the word of God ſtandeth ſure and unmoveable: the Lord he careth for you; and Paul ſaith, 'God, who 'giveth us richly all things to enjoy,' 1 Pet. v. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Alſo Chriſt ſaith, Mat. vi. 33. 'Seek ye firſt the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow.' Such words and promiſes of God muſt needs remain true for ever, and therefore no good thing can be wanting to them that believe; this even daily experience

rience may teach us. We see commonly poor folks and their children to be better liking than many rich folks and their children, for that the use of their small sustenance is by the blessing of God increased, and doth much more feed and nourish them, than all that most abundant sustenance doth feed and nourish the rich. Now, whereas the wicked do sometime suffer need in the time of famine, some do even die through hunger, that is, the special vengeance of God, as is also the pestilence, war, and such like; otherwise it plainly appeareth, that not meat, but God doth feed and sustain us. Howbeit, whereas God feedeth the world with bread, and not with his word alone without bread, he therefore doth it, that he may so hide his work, and exercise our faith; so he commandeth the Israelites, that they should prepare themselves to battle, and yet he would not have the victory to be gotten by their sword and labour; but he himself would by means of their sword and labour overcome and vanquish the enemies. Here also it might be said, that the soldier doth slay and overcome the enemies, not by his sword alone, but by the word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God; whereupon David saith, Psal. xliv. 6. 'I will not trust in 'my bow, neither shall my sword save me. And again, He 'delighteth not in the strength of the horse: He taketh not 'pleasure in the legs of a man,' &c. Psal. cxlvii. 10. Nevertheless God useth men, swords, horses, and bows, howbeit not by the power and strength of them, but by them as by certain means and instruments he himself fighteth and overcometh; this he hath sufficiently declared oftentimes, when he hath overthrown the enemies and delivered his people, which surely he daily doth, when the case so requireth. After the same sort God useth bread also, by it, forasmuch as it is made for that use, he feedeth us, howbeit when it is wanting, he nevertheless feedeth them that be his even by his word, without bread, as he doth at other times by bread, so that bread doth as it were work under God, as the apostles and preachers of the word in spiritual and evangelical meat serve under him, as it is mentioned, 1 Cor.

3. for as God uſeth their miniſtry to teach men, he himſelf by his Spirit ſpeaking in their hearts through it, and doing all things alone, which he both is able to do, and oftentimes wont to do without the miniſtry of the preachers of his word, although he will not in the mean ſeaſon have the miniſtry of his to be deſpiſed, and ſo himſelf tempted; ſo to the nouriſhing of our outward man, he outwardly uſeth bread, although he doth make byhis word inwardly, that we be nouriſhed and ſtrengthened, which he can as well do, as is wont to do when bread is away, that all our nouriſhment may be attributed to the word and not to bread, which he uſeth as an inſtrument, but yet of no neceſſity. That I may ſpeak briefly, all creatures do as it were ſerve under him, and are his inſtruments, without which notwithſtanding he is able, and oftentimes wont to work; by this means providing, that we may depend on his word alone, neither truſting more unto him, when we have bread and other things which our life uſeth, neither leſs when we want them, but may uſe them with giving of thanks when he beſtoweth them upon us, when otherwiſe, we may patiently be without them, being certain nevertheleſs, that we ſhall live and be nouriſhed in both times, both when we have them, and when we have them not. And by this faith that vain and ungodly care of the belly, greedy deſire of things, and carefulneſs of life are overcome. 'Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city,' &c. This temptation is quite contrary to the former; he aſſaileth us with ſuch temptation alſo, whereby he goeth about to move us to tempt God, even as he willeth Chriſt to caſt himſelf down from a pinnacle of the temple, and ſo tempt God, when there were ladders, by which he might deſcend; and that this temptation provoketh to tempt God, it is manifeſt even by the anſwer of Chriſt, who anſwereth Satan in this manner: 'It is 'written again, Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' Hereby he ſignifieth, that the devil would provoke him to tempt God. Now this temptation doth not amiſs follow the former; for when the devil perceiveth the heart that in poverty and neceſſity it truſteth in God, he by and by maketh an end of tempting by care of the belly

belly and desire of things, as being weaker than that by it he may overthrow one so strong in faith. He thinketh therefore with himself, If he profess himself to be of so religious and assured a mind, I will on this side also give occasion to sin; and so he setteth upon him on the right side, affirming that that is to be believed, which the Lord hath neither spoken, nor commanded to be believed as is this: If he should bring thee to such madness, that when thou hast bread at home given thee of God, as he of his goodness giveth unto us every day, thou wouldest not use it, but wouldest procure to thyself necessity and hunger, saying I must trust in God, I will not feed on this earthly bread, I will tarry till God give me other from heaven. This were to tempt God; for he doth not command thee to believe, that that thing shall come unto thee whereof thou hast need, if it be already come of his liberality; for why shouldest thou believe that he will give that which thou hast already of his gift? Thou seest therefore that the devil doth here object a certain necessity and need unto Christ, where there is none; for there was a sufficient mean to descend from the pinnacle of the temple, neither was it reason to attempt this new unaccustomed and unnecessary mean whereunto Satan persuaded. Moreover, allegorically, we may by this doing of Satan perceive his craft and subtility 'The devil 'taketh him, saith the Evangelist, up into the holy city, and 'setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple.' By this emptation he repleniseth men with cogitations that seem most holy, that they may think themselves most plentifully endued with faith, and to stand in a very holy place, when as notwithstanding they are set not in the temple, but on the temple, that is, not in the sincerity of faith, but in a vain outward shew of faith; nevertheless he is in the mean season in the holy city, because that this kind of men is wont to be no where but among Christians, where the word of the Lord and the preaching of faith is daily heard, who also like unto Satan have sentences of scripture in a readiness, as concerning the words, although they always pervert and wrest them to their own error and false imaginations; so Satan recited here unto Christ, out of the 91st Psalm, that God doth com-

mand his angels concerning his children, that they keep them, lifting them up with their hands. But the deceiver concealed that which is added, that is, in their ways. For thus hath the Pſalm xci. 11. 'For he ſhall 'give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy 'ways.' So that the cuſtody of angels is not by the commandment promiſed unto us, unleſs we walk in our ways which he hath preſcribed us. If we walk in them, we ſhall aſſuredly be kept of angels; howbeit the devil ſaith nothing of the ways of the Lord, but promiſeth by corrupting the ſaying of the Pſalm, that it is commanded to the angels, to keep us in what ways ſoever, whereof the Lord hath commanded nothing. And this is Satan's ſeducing, and perſuaſion to tempt God. But this temptation doth not eaſily happen in theſe outward things, as are bread, apparel, houſes, &c. Thou mayeſt find indeed ſome raſh heads, which for no cauſe do put their life, goods, and good name in great danger, as they do which go on warfare of their own accord, which leap raſhly into moſt deep waters, or go voluntary into other no ſmall dangers. Of whom Jeſus the ſon of Syrach ſaith, 'He that loveth 'danger, ſhall periſh therein,' Eccleſ. iii. 26. whereof the Germans have a proverb,' Self do, ſelf have,' what every one followeth, that he cometh unto. So it is almoſt uſual that none are oftner drowned, than they that are moſt exerciſed in ſwimming, and none fall more perilouſly, than they which uſe to attempt high matters. But he ſhall be hardly found, which having a falſe and overmuch confidence in God, attempteth any ſuch thing, or uſeth not the things preſent, as bread apparel, houſe, and ſuch like, looking with peril, while God provide otherwiſe for him by miracle. We read of a certain Hermite, who becauſe he had vowed to take bread of no man, brought himſelf into peril by hunger, and ſo periſhed, and undoubtedly went ſtraight to hell, becauſe of that falſe faith and tempting of God, which he learned no other where but of the devil, ſo that his madneſs was altogether like that, whereunto Satan here perſuadeth Chriſt, viz. that he ſhould

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caſt himſelf down from a pinnacle of the temple; howbeit thou ſhalt find very few which do follow this hermit, and do defer to enjoy temporal things preſent, for that they hope that God will give them other from heaven.

But in ſpiritual things, which concern the nouriſhment, not of the body, but of the ſoul, this temptation is wont to be both mighty and often; in theſe God hath appointed a certain manner, whereby the ſoul may be fed, nouriſhed and ſtrengthned, both moſt commodiouſly, and alſo moſt bleſſedly, ſo that no good thing at all can be wanting unto it. This nouriſhment, this ſtrength, this ſalvation, is Chriſt our Saviour, in whom the Father hath moſt abundantly offered and given all good things. But there are very few which deſire him, the moſt part ſeek ſome other where, whereby their ſouls may live, and obtain ſalvation. Such are all they which ſeek ſalvation by their works. Theſe are they whom Satan having ſet on a pinnacle of the temple, biddeth them caſt themſelves down, and they obey him; they deſcend, whereas it is no way that is, they believe and truſt in God, yet ſo, as they truſt alſo in their own works, in which is no place at all for faith and truſt, no way or path unto God, wherefore throwing themſelves down headlong, they break their neck, falling into utter deſparation. Now Satan perſuadeth miſerable men unto this madneſs, as alſo he perſuaded Chriſt to caſt himſelf down from a pinnacle of the temple, by places of ſcripture perverted and miſapplied, wherein works are commanded, whereby he maketh them believe, that the angels ſhall keep them, that is, that they ſhall be approved of God, when as indeed they can by nothing ſo offend him, as by that mad truſt and confidence in works; for they acknowledge not, that the ſcripture doth no where require works without faith, or that it doth every where require a ſound and lively faith from which works proceed. We have at large declared who are ſuch, namely, incredulous hypocrites, which are given to works without faith, which falſly boaſt of the name of Chriſtians, challenging to themſelves to be chief in the flock of Chriſt; for this temptation muſt

be in the holy city. Now these two temptations, and the causes of them do greatly differ. In the former cause why men do not believe, is need and hunger, for they are thereby moved to distrust God, and despair of his goodness. In the latter the cause why they do not believe, is overmuch abundance, for that miserable men are full of most plentiful and abundant treasure, so that they loath it, coveting to have some other special thing, whereby they may procure the salvation of their souls. So our case standeth ill in both respects: if we have nothing we despair, and distrust God; if we have plenty of things we loath them, and require other, being then also void of faith. Concerning the first, we fly and hate scarcity and seek plenty; concerning the latter, we seek scarcity and fly plenty. Howsoever God dealeth with us we are not content; our incredulity is a bottomless pit of malice and ungodliness. 'Again the 'Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain.' Here he tempteth with vain glory and power of the world, as by the words of the devil doth plainly appear who shewing Christ the kingdoms of the world offered them to him, if he would worship him. By this temptation they are overcome which revolt from faith, that they may enjoy glory and power here, or at least do so temper their faith that they lose not these things: in the number of these are all heritics and troublers of the church, which do therefore either live, or oppugn the sincerity of faith, that being exempted out of the common number they may be extolled on high. So we may place this temptation on the right-hand, as the first assaileth us on the left; for as the first temptation is of adversity, whereby we are moved to indignation, impatience, and diffidence, so this third temptation is of prosperity, whereby we are provoked to delights, glory, pleasures, and whatsoever is excellent and delectable in the world. The second temptation is altogether spiritual, whereby Satan by deceit, and marvelous and secret subtility goeth about to withdraw man from faith; for whom he cannot overcome with poverty, scarcity, necessity, and misery, them he tempteth with

with riches, favour, glory, delights, power, &c. and so he assaileth us on either side, yea, when he prevaileth by neither way, he goeth about, as St. Peter saith, and attempteth all means, that whom he can overcome neither by adversity, that is, by the first temptation, nor by prosperity, that is, by the third temptation, he may overcome either by error blindness, or false understanding of the scriptures, that is, by the second temptation which is spiritual and therefore most hurtful; by which if he prevail against any, they are also overcome both on the left side and on the right; for whether they suffer such poverty, or enjoy plenty of things, whether they contend, or yield unto all things, both is nothing while they are in error, either in patience in adversity or constancy in prosperity can be of no importance. For in both even heretics oftentimes do notably excel, and it is a practice of the devil oftentimes, to feign himself overcome in the first and third temptation, that he may reign victor by the second; he can be content, that they that be his, do oftentimes suffer poverty patiently, and do also contemn the world, although they do neither of both with a simple heart, and sincere faith. Every one therefore of these three temptations is grievous and very hard, but the middle one is most perilous of all, for it assaileth the doctrine of faith, and is spiritual and wont to deceive in spiritual things. The other two also doth assail faith, howbeit in these outward things, as adversity and prosperity, altho' they do also urge us very sore; for it cannot be a little grievous to suffer poverty, to want bread, and such other things necessary: again, it is no less grievous to neglect, and wholly to deny favour, glory, riches, friends, companions, and other commodities which we have; but an entire and sound faith in the word of God can perform both notably, and if it be a strong faith, they seem very easy and delectable unto it. We cannot certainly know the order of these temptations which happened to Christ, for that the evangelists have not described them after one order; for St. Luke hath set that last, which St. Matthew hath set in the midst, and that which Mat-

thew hath set last, Luke hath placed in the midst. But they do not so much consist in the order; notwithstanding, when any will teach the people concerning these temptations, it were better to follow the order of Luke; for he may fitly say, and thus rehearse; that satan doth first tempt us with poverty and adversity, whereby if he prevail not, then he tempteth us with prosperity and glory, which if he do in vain, then he assaileth us with all his might, and tempteth us with error, lies, delusion, and other spiritual subtilties; yet neither is this order always observed of satan; but he tempteth Christians sometime with the first, sometime with the third temptation, as he hath and seeth occasion. Matthew was not careful to rehearse them in that order, which they have almost by their own nature, and which may be commodious for him that shall teach of them. Yea, it may be that they happened not unto Christ by any certain order, but that he was assailed of satan one day with this, another day with that, during the space of those forty days, as satan thought it most convenient and meet for his purpose. 'And behold angels came 'and ministred unto him.' This I think was done corporally, that they having taken bodies appeared and ministred unto him meat and drink, as his serviters at the table, and ministers of all other things necessary for his life. Yea, and I think that the devil also appeared unto him in a corporal form, perhaps as an angel; for in that he took Christ, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, also whereas in a moment he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, he sufficiently declared, that he was more than man, and such a one surely he shewed himself openly, when he offered that he would give unto him those kingdoms, and required that he would worship him; and undoubtedly he did not appear like a devil when he did these things, for he loveth to appear after a fair sort, especially when he will lie and deceive: for then he transformeth himself into an angel of light, as St. Paul witnesseth. Now this is written chiefly for our consolation, that we may not doubt, that many angels shall minister unto us, when one devil tempteth us,

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if we fight valiantly; for if we ſtand faſt in faith, God will not ſuffer us to be troubled and pinched with poverty, more than is meet, that he will ſooner ſend his angels to miniſter unto us, to be our butlers, our cooks, and to help us in all our neceſſities; neither are theſe things written for Chriſt's cauſe, whom they cannot profit, but they are written for us, that we may learn to believe, that if the angels miniſtred unto him, they ſhall alſo when the caſe ſo requireth miniſter unto us his brethren and members. The Lord give us faith to believe this.

SERMON XXIV.

Concerning the leading a godly Life.

Epheſ. v. 1. to the 9. *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, &c.*

THis text is exhortary, wherein St. Paul, according to his manner, and accuſtomed care for the brethren, exhorteth Chriſtians not to leave, or ſlack the ſtudy and care of godlineſs, and give themſelves to ſlothfulneſs, but to declare by their works the word that they have learned of him, that is, to ſhew it forth by the fruits of faith, and make it plauſible and honourable, to the edifying of the Heathen, leaſt that by the vices of them which profeſs the doctrine of the goſpel, they take occaſion to hate that doctrine, and ſo be offended by them, whom it behove to win unto Chriſt. 'Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.' Firſt, therefore he exhorteth us, foraſmuch as we are by Chriſt made the ſons of God, to imitate ſuch a Father, as dear children, marvellous gently, and alluringly he ſpeaketh unto us, calling us dear children, that by the love of God our Father toward us, he may provoke us to love him again, and them whom he commandeth us to love, even as he hath loved us firſt; but how hath

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he loved us? Surely not after that common sort alone whereby in this life he nourisheth and sustaineth us being unworthy, together with all the ungodly; making his Sun to arise on the good, and on the evil, and sending rain on the just and unjust; whereof Christ speaketh, Mat v. 'Be ye perfect as your Father is perfect.' But he loveth us also after another special manner, in that he hath given his Son for us, John iii. For he hath abundantly bestowed upon us all temporal, and also eternal good things, yea, his own self, and hath as it were poured himself with all that he is, hath, and can, into us who were sinners, unworthy enemies, and servants of satan, so that he could not do and give unto us more and greater things. Now he whom this divine fire of love which filleth heaven and earth, and yet is not comprehended, doth not kindle and inflame to love likewise his neighbour, whosoever he be, friends, or enemy, he, I say, will neither by law, precepts, doctrine, threatnings, and force be ever moved to godliness and love. Walk, saith the apostle, 'in love,' whereby he signifieth, that our life should be nothing else, but meer love. Howbeit he will not have us walk in the love of the world, which in love seeketh those things which are his own, and loveth so long as there is any thing, whereby it looketh for profit and lucre. Therefore he saith, 'As Christ also hath loved us,' who neither sought nor could look for any profit or advantage of us, and yet he loved us so greatly, that he gave himself for us, and not only his other good things which he giveth us daily, and he so gave himself for us, that he might be an oblation and sacrifice, to obtain the good will and favour of the Father toward us, and to bring to pass, that we might now have God a merciful and favourable father, being become his true children and heirs, &c. So also it behoveth us to give and lend, not only to our friends, but also to our enemies, neither to count this sufficient, but to be ready also even to die both for friends and foes, thinking nothing else, but that we may serve and profit our neighbours both in body and goods, as long as we shall be

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in the pilgrimage of this life, seeing that we possess all things being given unto us by Christ. 'And hath given 'himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for 'a sweet smelling savour.' This manner of speech St. Paul borrowed out of the Old Testament wherein those corporal sacrifices are written oftentimes to have yielded to the Lord a sweet savour, that is, to have been acceptable unto him; notwithstanding that was not because of the work and sacrifice in itself, as the Jews falsely thought, and therefore were very often reproved of the prophets, but for Christ's sake who was to come, the one and only sacrifices of a good savour, whom all those sacrifices of the law did shadow forth, and represent: wherefore that which St. Paul here saith, is as much as if he had said, All the sacrifices of the Old Testament have an end, they can now be of no price, Christ himself is the only sacrifice, which yieldeth unto God a sweet smelling savour, that is, is pleasing and acceptable unto him, whereby we are assured that we are acceptable unto God, and do please him; wherefore there is no other sacrifice in the church which may be offered for us, beside this only sacrifice, which being once offered, hath at once satisfied for the sins of all the elect; and altho' we after the example of this sacrifice, do offer our bodies to God, as St. Paul teacheth, Rom. xii. yet we offer them not either for ourselves, or for other, forasmuch as that is proper to Christ, the only sacrifice, whereby the salvation of all is obtained; wherefore those things smell most stinkingly before God, whatsoever men offer with this mind, as tho' they would satisfy for their own sins, or for the sin of other, whereof we both have and will elsewhere speak more.

'But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, 'let it not be once named amongst you.' By the name of uncleanness beside fornication he understandeth all lust, and leacherous filthiness, which is committed out of matrimony, which for the filthiness of them he doth not vouchsafe to rehearse by name, as Rom. i. he speaketh very grossly of them; altho' in matrimony also a mean may be exceeded, and it is the duty of Christians so to moderate the use of marriage, that they re-

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quire and perform due love and benevolence only for avoiding fornication, but we are fallen so far, that they are most rare, which come together only for procreation of children and to avoid fornication, which surely were best and should very well become us. Now the apostle saith, 'Let it not be once named among you,' that is, be so far from these evils, that they may not so much as be spoken of; although it will never come to pass in this exile, that none among Christians be weak, and do not oftentimes fall, yet true Christians will never wink at those things; they will reprove, amend, put away, cover and cure whatsoever such thing shall burst forth amongst them, that the heathen may not be offended and say: See what vices the Christians suffer among themselves, how unclean and lewd a life do they lead, thinking that all their whole life is defiled with like vices as is their own: we must needs confess, that among Christians some do oftentimes fall, which we must needs bear; it is well if only the better part liveth well, and winketh not at their sins, neither teacheth them, but rather reproveth and amendeth them. So St. Paul exhorteth, Gal. vi. that they which are spiritual will restore them that offend, with the spirit of meekness; and he sharply reproveth the Corinthians, for that they did lightly pass over many sins, of certain persons. For sin being reprehended and punished, is now counted as no sin, neither can the church be blamed because of it: after the same sort heed must be taken, that covetousness be not named among Christians, that is, that they become not infamous by the name thereof, which they shall bring to pass, if, when it chanceth that covetous men be amongst them, or one useth deceit toward another in their business and affairs, or some contend in judgment for those outward things, if I say they do not wink hereat, but do reprove and correct such, that the sincerity of the doctrine of the gospel may obtain due estimation among the people, and there may be no cause openly to dispraise our ministry, 2 Cor. vi. These things have I spoken because of them, who as soon as they see that all things do not resemble and shew forth a holiness among Christians, and that some do stumble

ſtumble and fall, do think, that there is no Chriſtian left, that the goſpel is to no purpoſe, and that all things are taught and done in vain; as tho' the life of Chriſtians were now without fight victory and due triumph over ſin being obtained, when as rather it is a warfare and a continual fight; whereas therefore they do now fight and are in the camp, it is no marvel if ſome fly away, if ſome be wounded, if ſome fall, yea, and be even ſlain outright; war is not made without peril and hurt, if it be earneſt war.

'As becometh ſaints.' This he addeth to his exhortation, as a reaſon and cauſe ſhewing why it lieth upon Chriſtians, to take heed that they be not defamed by theſe names; for they are ſaints, now it becometh ſuch to be chaſte, bountiful, and ready to give, to teach and do the ſame; thou ſeeſt here, that St. Paul calleth Chriſtian ſaints, while they remain yet in this life, and are preſſed with fleſh and blood, from which nothing cometh but ſin, which he doth undoubtedly not for their good works, but becauſe of the ſanctifying blood of Chriſt, as he witneſſeth, 1 Cor. vi. 11. "But ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God." Foraſmuch therefore as we are ſaints, it is meet that we ſhould ſhew the ſame in our works, and altho' we be as yet weak, nevertheleſs we muſt daily endeavour to live purely, and far from covetouſneſs, to the praiſe and glory of God, and edifying of our neighbours, even the heathen. 'Neither 'filthineſs.' All unchaſt and lewd words of baudry, uncleanneſs, and letcherous matters, he calleth filthineſs, of which words abundance is wont to be poured forth in inns and victualling houſes, in the time of eating, drinking, and playing. Theſe the Grecians uſed very freely and accuſtomably more than others, as their own poets and other writers do ſufficiently witneſs; but he eſpecially reproveth here thoſe lewd and wanton words, which are ſpoken openly without ſhame, which ſtir up wicked and unchaſt thoughts, and are cauſe of many offences, eſpecially being ſpoken among youth, according to that ſaying, 'Evil communication corrupt good man-

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'ners,' 1 Cor. xv. 33. as the apoſtle writeth to the Corinthians; and if any Chriſtians ſhould be ſo careleſs of their tongue, that ſuch words ſhould come from them, ſuch muſt be chaſtiſed of the church, and if they do not amend, they muſt not be ſuffered, leſt becauſe of them the whole church be ill reported of, as tho' theſe things were either taught among Chriſtians or ſuffered to be unpuniſhed, as it is wont to be among the Heathens. 'Nor fooliſh talking.' Fables and other trifling ſpeeches and jeſts are called fooliſh talking, which the Grecians alſo were wont to uſe more than other nations, being very witty to invent ſuch vain ſpeeches. Of this ſort are thoſe tales, which our women and maidens are wont to tell, ſpinning at the diſtaff, alſo the terms and verſes of juglers and ſuch like fellows, and many common ſongs, which are partly even filthy, and partly contain other trifling and vain things; but eſpecially it is unſeemly and inconvenient for Chriſtians to uſe ſuch fooliſh and trifling talk, when they come together to hear the word of God, or to read and ſearch the Scriptures, and yet notwithſtanding almoſt even ſuch folly happeneth among them, when many come together; for altho' they begin with ſerious matters, nevertheleſs they are marvellous eaſy brought unto trifles, from earneſt and holy matters, to ridiculous and vain ſpeeches, wherewith both the time is ſpent in vain, and better things are neglected; ſo have they been wont certain years hitherto, at every feaſt of Eaſter in the time of preaching to tell ſome ridiculous tale to ſtir up the people from ſleep; they did not unlike at the feaſt of the nativity of Chriſt, uſing ſongs or carrols, wherein they ſaid, they made diſcourſes of the birth and infancy of Jeſus, howbeit ridiculous metre and words, moving rather laughter than devotion, as they called it: alſo they ſung many feigned fables of the wiſe men, whom they made; three kings, of the paſſion of the Lord, of the puniſhment of Dorothea, and many others, all which were nothing but fooliſh talking and vain inventions, altogether unworthy of Chriſtians. To the number of theſe I might well add thoſe hiſtories of

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saints, which they call the Legends, and that flood of lies, of miracles and pilgrimages to images, and monuments of saints, masses, and worshipping of saints, indulgences, and innumerable others, not so much foolish as ungodly inventions which in the assemblies of the church, were wont to be chiefly extolled in the pulpit, which were so contrary to godliness, that they deserve much rather to be called the wicked inventions of Satan, than foolish imaginations of men; for they did not as ridiculous lies are wont to do, corrupt good manners only, of which St. Paul speaketh especially here, but they did wholly overthrow faith, and put out of place the word of God, so that they did not only not beseem saints, but did plainly abolish all saints. Those former therefore were fables and tales of men, which are not believed, neither esteemed any thing of, but rather laught at, although in the mean time they corrupt good manners, withdraw Christians from serious matters, and make them slack and slothful: but these latter are devilish fables, which are believed for a truth, and counted for serious, yea, and heavenly matters, when as notwithstanding, they be nothing else but feigned devices of Satan, whereby, he with his angels deludeth and mocketh us. 'Nor jesting.' Hereby he understandeth all pleasant speeches, which they whom they call jesters are wont to use, to make men merry, which by pleasant discourses, and merry terms do move laughter and stir up mends minds to mirth, and cheerfulness, which is wont to be usual in civil banquets, and when civil companions meet together. This jesting the heathens counted for a virtue, especially Aristotle; but St. Paul among Christians giveth it place among vices for Christians have other speeches, whereby they may recreate and cheer themselves in Christ, which also do bring some profit with them, although it easily happeneth, that many Christians do offend oftentimes herein; but they that are true Christians, do never praise it, neither do suffer that any should give himself to this jesting, and study to exceed therein, but they reprove and prohibit him, especially in the church, in the time of preaching and teaching;

ing; for Christ hath witnessed, that we shall in the last day give an account of every idle word; it is meet indeed, that Christians be an elegant and amiable people, but therewithal grave, that there may be seen in them a severe gentleness, and a gentle severity, as the life of Christ is described unto us in the gospel.

'Which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.' This comprehendeth all idle words which want a proper name; now I call them idle words which make neither to the edifying of faith nor to the use of our temporal life; for there be things enough both profitable and pleasant, which when it pleaseth us to speak, we talk of in the short time of this life, as of Christ, of love, and other things either necessary or profitable: whereof St. Paul admonisheth, when he saith, 'But rather giving of thanks;' for our daily speech ought to be the praise of God, and giving of thanks to him, as well privately, as publicly in sermons, for such infinite good things, as he hath given unto us in Christ, even unspeakable; but such is the manner of our reason and nature, that necessary and profitable things are neglected, and foolish and frivolous things are chiefly regarded. Now mark here, if St. Paul doth not suffer in Christians speeches that be only pleasant and tending to mirth, what thinkest thou would he say of that pestilent backbiting and slandering, which reigneth now in all companies of men! Yea what would he say of them which openly in sermons do as it were bite and rent one another with reproachful words, and maliciously accuse and speak evil of one another? 'For this ye know, that no 'whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, 'who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of 'Christ, and of God.' In these words he doth very plainly pronounce against them which are infected with such vices, that they are heathens under the name of Christians, how many soever do not bring forth the fruits of faith; this is a brief and certain sentence: He that is a fornicator, hath denied the faith an unclean person hath denied the faith, a covetous person hath denied the faith, all such are apostates, persuaded and traiterous toward God, as St. Paul writeth also unto Timothy of him that

that neglecteth them that be of his family, 'But if any 'faith he, provide not for his own, and ſpecially for thoſe 'of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe 'than an infidel,' 1 Tim. v. 8. How could he more ſeverely and terribly fray us from vices? For he ſaith, 'For 'this ye know,' as if he ſaid Do not ſo much as doubt, count it not a play, neither let it be ſport unto you, neither comfort yourſelves with vain hope of a Chriſtian name, and for that ye are counted Chriſtians, theſe things ſhall profit you no more than it profited the Jews, that they were the children of Abraham and diſciples of Moſes, it was ſpoken to all which Chriſt ſaith, Mat. vii. 21. 'Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, 'ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth 'the will of myFather which is in heaven.' There is need of doing, and our faith muſt be proved by works; whom therefore that great force of heavenly fire ſhall not inflame unto godlineſs, that is, the admonition of the incomparable love of God towards us, which he ſet in the firſt place, him let theſe horrible threatnings of hell fire move, viz. whereas he witneſſeth, that as many as will not follow God, and walk in love, and ſhew forth their faith by their works are neither the ſons of God, nor heirs of his kingdom, whereupon it followeth, that they are undoubtedly heirs with Satan of hell fire. Whom therefore theſe two ſo mighty provokements ſhall not ſtir up to the fear of God and godlineſs, with all diligence to the duty of a Chriſtian, he is plainly a block and a ſtone, having a heart harder than the anvil, as Job ſaith; he particularly reproveth a covetous perſon, and pronounceth him an idolater or worſhipper of images, whereby ſurely he declareth, how greatly he is diſpleaſed with them that are infected with this vice, and in his third chapter of his epiſtle to the Coloſſians, he ſaith, alſo the ſame thing of him; the cauſe hereof I think to be this; other ſinners uſe only that thing, wherein they offend, and make it ſerve their luſt and deſire; ſo the fornicator and unclean perſon uſe their body to pleaſure; the proud perſon uſeth riches, learning, the favour of men, and ſuch like, unto glory; only this miſerable idolater is a ſlave to his money and

riches, and his sin is, that he spareth his money and goods, keepeth and hoardeth them up, dareth not apply them neither to his own use, nor to the use of others, but doth plainly serve and worship them as his god, and so much esteemeth them that he would sooner lose and suffer to perish the kingdom of God, than he would spend his money, or give the value of a rush toward the maintaining either of a preacher, or an instructor of youth, whereby the word of God and his kingdom might be furthered. Forasmuch as all the trust and hope of such a man is reposed in money, and not in God alone, who giveth him abundantly whereby to live, money is worthily called his God, and he himself said to be an idolater, and hath no inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. What can be invented more filthy and pestilent than this disease? Wo unto thee, incredulity, how abominable and hurtful an evil art thou? 'Let no man deceive you with vain words.' These are the vain words of them which extenuate and make light of fornication and such like sins, as though they were not greatly evil, or did so much offend God. There were not wanting Philosophers and Poets among the heathen, which counted all use of letchery beside adultery only, lawful, as a thing natural, as is to use meat and drink; so saith Terence, 'It is not 'a wickedness, believe me, for a young man to follow 'harlots,' &c. But this is to be ignorant of God, and to live according to the lore of concupiscence, as the Gentiles were wont to do. Moreover such vain words are those, which although they have some likelihood of truth, yet indeed are trifling, and shall not excuse any; so covetousness doth not want a cloak and pretence for itself, for him that seeketh his own with the disadvantage of others, they call a good husband, industrious, one that looketh to his business, although in the mean while the poor perish with hunger, or are otherwise afflicted above their strength. Wherefore such speeches are prophane and heathenish, by which love is extinguished, and they which give ear to them and believe them are deluded with a vain hope; 'For because of 'these things cometh the wrath of God upon the chil-

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dren of disobedience. This is another light which we ought to follow, leaving the obscure light of reason, which doth not greatly condemn fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, &c. This our light witnesseth, that for such things the wrath of God cometh upon unbelievers, whom he calleth the children of disobedience, and therefore cannot abide to believe the word of God, and to give themselves to the obedience of faith. This Paul declareth, 1 Cor. x. by many examples, where he saith that a great part of the people was slain for fornication, of which deed is spoken also, Numb xxv. for violence also, covetousness, and uncleanness, the whole world was destroyed by the flood. Wherefore a sufficient sharp, yea, and a certain vengeance abideth them that are infected with these wickednesses: now he calleth them the children of disobedience, that is, of incredulity, which is as much as if he had said, Of them that have revolted from the faith, and have renounced Christ. Hereby we see and learn, that he that doth not approve his faith by works, is no better than a heathen, yea worse, inasmuch as he hath renounced Christ, and denied the faith once received; for this cause the vengeance and wrath of God shall come upon them that are such, as we Germans do now try, unto whom God sendeth abundantly the pestilence, famine, and cruel war. Let men take heed they give no ear to those deceivers, which with vain words promise that those sins shall escape unpunished: Let those slack and slothful Christians beware, who although they be not blind heathen, but know well that uncleanness and covetousness are sins, and think or teach no otherwise, do nevertheless live wickedly, resting upon faith, whereby they hope that they shall obtain salvation without works, forasmuch as works do not save; yea, altho' they very well know, that faith without works is a feigned faith, and that worthy fruits and good works must needs follow, where a true and sound faith is, yet notwithstanding they live securely in their sins, presuming of the grace and mercy of God, nothing fearing God and his judgments, when notwithstanding it is certain, that God doth require the mortification of the old Adam, and good fruit of good trees. Although

perhaps Paul speaketh not here properly of these, but of them which think and in vain words teach, that fornication, covetousness and such like, are not sins, as the blind heathen did, and many do at this day under the name of Christians; yet is it not to be feared, seeing they live no better than the heathen do, and be themselves fornicators and covetous persons, that they shall feel the like vengeance of God with them, yea so much more grievous vengeance, as they do know more certainly that those are sins, according to that saying, Rom. ii. 3. "Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. &c. Eph. v. 7. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. So Peter also saith, 1 Pet. iv. 3. The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness," &c. but from henceforth should have nothing common with them, but spend the rest of our life in the service and worship of God. When we were Gentiles, we knew not that these were sins, we were so blinded through incredulity and ignorance of God; but after that we were made light in the Lord, that is, lightned by Christ, we do not only well understand what God is and what he requireth of us, what sin and iniquity, but are also able now to be instead of light unto others, and to teach them those things which we have learned. Such Paul said the Philipians were, chap. ii. 15. 'In the midst of a crooked and 'perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the 'world.' So before we were not only dark, but darkness itself, inasmuch as we were not only ignorant and erred, but did also bring others into the same darkness, both by words and deeds. Let us be thankful therefore to him, which hath called us out of this darkness into his marvellous

vellous light, walking as the children of light, which Peter also admonisheth us to do. 'For the fruit of the 'Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.' Forasmuch as he hath here spoken of light, it had been more agreeable to have added, for the fruit of light, as the Latin editions have, than of the Spirit, as it is read in the Greek. Who knoweth whether the Greek copies were here changed upon this occasion, for that Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians treateth of the fruits of the Spirit: But this skilleth little, of the Spirit and of light, are all one in this place. Goodness therefore is a fruit either of the Spirit or of light, contrary to covetousness, whereby a Christian man is good, that is, profitable and beneficial to others, ready to gratify and do well to his neighbours. Righteousness, being a fruit of the Spirit, is contrary to covetousness; for it maketh that no man doth take away from another that which is his, either by violence, either by craft or guile, but that he endeavour rather to give unto every man that which is his own. Truth is a fruit of the Spirit, contrary to hypocrisy and lying, which requireth that a Christian be true and uncorrupt, not only in words, but also in his whole life, that he do not glory of the name of a Christian, without works, that he be not called a Christian, and yet live after the manner of a heathen, in fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, and other vices, &c.

SERMON XXIII.

God's Providence and Care for his Children.

Luke v. 1 to the 11. *And it came to pass, that as the the people pressed upon him to hear,* &c.

TO them that believe this text is most easy to be understood, which setteth forth two things unto us namely, faith and temporal good things. First, it, declareth unto them that believe in Christ, that they

shall have sufficient wherewith to sustain themselves even in this life; which Christ sheweth by this, when he giveth so many fishes to Peter and his companions, as they durst not so much as desire. So that Christ is careful even how to feed the belly, if that cursed incredulity be not an hindrance thereunto; for behold St. Peter, and consider his heart aright in your mind, then shall ye find, that he did not so much as think that he should take so many fishes. God therefore is present, and causes fishes to come into the net, even more then they would have wished; by which example we are admonished that they shall have sufficient of those things that are necessary for the sustenance of this life, which do believe. but they that do not believe can never be satisfied, whereby they fall into all kinds of vices. Hereunto pertaineth that which St. Paul saith, 1 Tim. vi 6. "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." This place of St. Paul plainly declareth what followeth our unbelief, viz. that it travelleth to get substance, and laboureth to be rich, and falleth into the temptation and snares of the devil; but we cannot see that, forasmuch as it is spiritual. If we could as well see the hurt, which it bringeth to spiritual things, as we can see that which it bringeth to corporal and outward things, then were it an easy matter to preach unto us; for we see plainly in outward things, how he that is given to the desire of money, scrapeth and gathereth together, doth injury to all men, that he alone may gather together and heap up many things, whereunto he may trust and say, Well, now have I goods enough. Whereby we may gather how unkind and unmerciful a covetous man is; for he doth good to no man, he sheweth himself gentle and kind to no man,

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he giveth nothing to any man, but looketh unto his own lucre and advantage.

Now this is a curſed thing, that we cannot ſo much as truſt unto the Lord, that he will feed our belly, thinking always that we ſhall periſh with hunger, when notwithſtanding we ſhall have things neceſſary, and that which is ſufficient for us, as Chriſt ſaith, Mat. vi. 25. "I ſay unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink; nor yet for your body what ye ſhall put on: Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his ſtature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Conſider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they ſpin. And yet I ſay unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of theſe. Wherefore if God ſo clothe the graſs of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is caſt into the oven, ſhall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, ſaying, What ſhall we eat; or what ſhall we drink? or wherewithal ſhall we be clothed? (For after all theſe things do the Gentiles ſeek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all theſe things. But ſeek ye firſt the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow ſhall take thought for the things of itſelf: ſufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Ye ſee in this place, how God hath a care for the fowls and flowers, and doth adorn them after a moſt goodly ſort; how much more will God give unto us thoſe things that be neceſſary? and yet we cannot put our truſt in him, ſo that the devil entangleth us in his ſnares. When one cometh ſo far, that he is not content with that he hath, nether truſteth in God, then charity muſt needs ſuddenly ceaſe, ſo that he doth good to no man, but only provideth that his own heap he increaſed. Hereupon came the ſpiritual ſtate of ſacrificing prieſts and monks, that they might only help themſelves, feed their belly, avoid labour, enter into monaſteries, that

thereof did arise a true proverb, 'Desparation maketh a 'monk.' yea, not only a monk but sacrificing priests, bishops and popes; for they trust not in God, that he is able to feed them, but they study upon this only that they may be delivered from all misery and infirmity, which is altogether to live incredulity: they never trusted in God that he is able to give them nourishment and things necessary, if any of them should marry a wife and remain without that state of Antichrist. Here is an example set forth unto us, which provoketh and allureth us to confidence, and first that we commit our belly to God; for he hath a care of us, even in temporal things, which sufficiently appeareth in Peter, whereas he took such a great multitude of fishes, which ran by great companies into his nets, whereby it plainly signified that God will forsake no man, but that every one shall have enough, if that we shall only trust in him, as the 37th Psalm affirmeth: 'I have been young, and now am old, 'yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed 'begging bread.' Things necessary shall not be wanting unto us, if faith be not wanting; for before we should want, the very angels should come and minister unto us food. Whereas men are commonly oppressed with so great misery, only unbelief is the cause thereof. And altho' God be with us, notwithstanding he requireth yet of us, work or labour, and hope, if he at any time defer somewhat to help us He commandeth Peter here, that for the taking of fishes, he should cast forth his nets. 'Launch out into the deep, saith he, and let down your 'net for a draught,' as if the Lord said, do thou that which belongeth to a fisher, cast thy net into the deep, and commit the success unto me, leave the care unto me. God leaveth not the care unto thee, but the work and labour; howbeit we after a clean contrary method, study to commit the care to ourselves and the labour to him. Whereby it cometh to pass, that every one for himself applieth his mind earnestly to gain, and to gather money unto himself, that he may not be inforced by any means to take pains and labour But if thou wilt live a Christian life, leave unto thy God to care how

how the fishes shall come into the nets, and go thou and take upon thee the state wherein thou mayest labour. Howbeit for the most part we wish such states of life, as in which there is no need of labour, which is altogether a devilish thing. And therefore have we been consecrated monks and sacrificing priests, that we might live only like gentlemen, without labour. And for the same cause parents have set their children to school, that at last they might live merry days, and to serve God, as they thought. Whereby it came to pass that they did not know, what a good life was; forasmuch as God especially commendeth that, and that indeed is acceptable unto him, which is gotten with the sweat of the brow, as he commanded Adam, Gen. iii. 19. 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' And the deeper thou art occupied in the law, in so much better case thy thinge are, wherefore follow thy work, labour, and trust in God, all carefulness being cast off. Now some murmur, and say, If faith be preached, that we must trust in God, and leave the care unto him, I might long enough, say they, believe or trust, before I should have wherewithal to be fed and sustained, if I should not labour. Yea it is plain enough that thou must labour, forasmuch as labour is commanded thee; howbeit suffer God to care for thee, believe thou and labour, then shalt thou assuredly have those things that be necessary for the sustaining of thy life. And this is another thing, that we must hope notwithstanding, though God deferreth for a time, therefore he suffereth them to labour all the night, and to take nothing, and sheweth himself to be such a one, as will suffer them to perish with hunger, which might have come into the mind of Peter, when he had fished so long and taken nothing, so that he might have said, now God will suffer my belly to perish with pining and famine. Howbeit he doth not so, but goeth on still in his labour, he plyeth his work and hopeth that God at the last will give him fishes, although he deferreth a time. God therefore is present, and giveth him so many fishes in one day, as he could scarce take in the space of eight days. Wherefore these things

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are to be learned well of thee, that thou labour and hope, although God deferreth his bleſſing a little: for altho' he deferreth a while, and ſuffereth thee to labour ſore, ſo that thou now think thy labour to be loſt, yet muſt thou not therefore deſpair, but repoſe thy hope in him, truſting aſſuredly that he will at the laſt give thee proſperous ſucceſs; for he will certainly come and give more than thou didſt need as he did here unto St. Peter. Wherefore if God delayeth with thee a little, think with thyſelf, he delayed alſo with St. Peter, and yet afterward gave unto him abundantly. Commit thy ſelf therefore to his good will and pleaſure, and leave not off thy work, but hope ſtill, and then ſhall not thy hope be fruſtrated. Thus much concerning the former part of the text, now let us hear the latter. After therefore that they had taken fiſhes, and taſted the fruit of faith, their faith is encreaſed and augmented. We therefore muſt go ſo far, that we may commit our belly to God; for he that cannot commit ſo much as his belly to him, will never commit his ſoul unto him. Howbeit that is only a childiſh faith. Here we learn firſt to go by benches and ſettles; here we do feed on milk as yet; but we muſt likewiſe learn by theſe to commit our ſoul alſo to God. The Evangeliſt ſo meaneth, when he ſaith, "When Simon Peter ſaw it, he fell down at Jeſus knees, ſaying, Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man, O Lord. For he was aſtoniſhed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fiſhes which they had taken." Let Peter be here a type or figure of them which believe eternal good things, and count him as one verily looking for and ſeeing the good things to come. A ſinful conſcience is of that nature, that it ſo behaveth itſelf, as Peter here did, whereas he flieth his Saviour, and thinketh, Lord, I am more unworthy than that I ſhould be ſaved, and ſit among thy ſaints and angels; for that good is moſt exceeding high. Here ſtraight conſcience is not able to comprehend ſuch great good things, but it thus thinketh; if I were as Peter and Paul, I could eaſily believe; which is altogether a fooliſh and vain thing. For if thou wouldeſt place thyſelf according to thine own holineſs,

lineſs, thou ſhouldeſt build upon the ſand. Thou muſt not do ſo, but behave thy ſelf like unto Peter, for in that he eſteemed himſelf vile, and judged himſelf unworthy of ſo great grace, he rightly became worthy. And therefore, whereas, thou art a ſinner, thou muſt truſt in God, and dilate and open wide thy conſcience and heart, that grace may enter in. After thou haſt now known God, thou muſt reject one of his gifts, that is, when as thou ſeeſt the great good things, thou muſt not deſpair. It is good that we know ourſelves, and the deeper we know ourſelves, ſo much the better. But that grace is not to be refuſed becauſe of thy ſins; For when thou ſhalt find thy conſcience to tremble ſo that it would drive away ſins, then art thou moſt ready and moſt fit to receive grace, then ſhalt thou find comfort in thy conſcience, and ſay with Micah, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage?" Mic. vii. 18. Whoſoever take not away ſins, they are no gods but idols; whereupon he ſaith rightly, that none is like unto our God; for other gods will find and not bring godlineſs, but the Almighty God doth nor find it, but bring it: wherefore thou muſt not forthwith deſpair, if thy conſcience trembleth and feeleth ſin; for the more defiled that thou art, ſo much the ſooner doth the Lord pour in his grace, if ſo be that thou be repentant and thirſteth after it. A great part go ſo far that they ſay that they merit grace, whilſt they diſpoſe themſelves thereunto, which is, as they interpret, whilſt they do that which lyeth in them, and alſo that they do ſatisfy for their ſins. But it is not ſo. The ſcripture teacheth us, that it is God that taketh away ſin, and caſteth it into the bottom of the ſea. We ſhall not put away ſins by our works, neither ſhall we be juſtified of ourſelves. God himſelf, and not but he ſhall do the thing, of his meer grace as Iſaiah ſaith, chap. xliii. 25. 'I, even I 'am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own 'ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.' And ſo muſt thou believe, otherwiſe thou ſhalt never obtain a joyful conſcience. Wherefore, when as Peter ſaid, I am a ſinner, he ſaid right. It is true indeed, there were cauſes, why

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he might be afraid of himself, and humble himself, but he ought not to refuse God, but most willingly receive him. Wherefore when thou shalt feel thy sin, like as Peter did, and shalt perceive that thou wouldst now fly from God, then it is need that thou do forthwith turn thyself, and come more and more unto him. For if God should go away, and would not take away sin, would not come unto thee, nor seek thee, yet the more thou perceivest thyself a sinner, the more oughtest thou to make unto him, which see thou mark well, and lay it up in a mindful memory. For as St. Peter doth here, so all consciences do, which are terrified of sins, and would fly from God, and seek another God, do not thou leave so, but come boldly, and join thyself nearer unto God. Otherwise if one go away to seek works, and help of another God, he is then found like the foolish virgins, which while they go to get themselves oil, are in the mean season shut out. But what doth Christ, when Peter so humbleth himself? and by reason of his great fear and terror, desireth the Lord to depart from him; did he leave him in such desperation of himself? no truly, but he comforteth him, saying thus, 'Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt 'catch men.' This is a joyful word, whereby weak hearts receive comfort. Now therefore that God hath a care for us, yea even in those things that pertain to the body, ye see by this, that he giveth Peter so many fishes; he maketh him also full and rich in spirit that he ought to bestow some of his plenty upon others. He maketh him a fisher both in body and in spirit: in body, for that he taketh many fishes which he may sell; but in spirit he is a fisher of men. For he hath the gospel, whereby other men must be brought to God by him, and the kingdom of Christ be encreased. Lo, it cometh to pass, where men believe, the Lord giveth so much, as succoureth and helpeth all men. The faithful man outwardly helpeth the needy with his substance and goods: and from within he breaketh forth, teacheth other, and inricheth them also inwardly. For as such a man cannot hold his peace, but is inforced to declare and shew to others, how he is dealt with, as it is in

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the 51ſt Pſalm, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right ſpirit within me Caſt me not away from thy preſence; and take not thy oly ſpirit from me Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation; and uphold me with thy free ſpirit. Then will I teach tranſgreſſors thy ways, and ſinners ſhall be converted unto thee." And in another Pſalm alſo David ſaith, 'I believed and 'therefore will I ſpeak.' Which is thus much in effect; when I believe, I know God, and taſte of his goodneſs, then I conſider the caſe of other men, and go and declare ſuch knowledge and goodneſs of God unto them. We ſee therefore in this text, how careful God is for them that be his, and that he doth ſuſtain them both in body and in ſpirit; but if he doth ſometime defer any thing, without all doubt it is through the fault of our incredulity, or becauſe we have now new begun to believe; for where faith is new and little, there is ſometime ſmall and ſlender help that we may learn to know the Lord, and to truſt in him; But when we have gone ſo far that we truſt ſtrongly in God, then nothing can be wanting unto us, then God poureth upon us both temporal and ſpiritual good things, and ſo abundant treaſures, that we may able to help others. This indeed is to inrich the poor and fill the hungry. This much ſhall ſuffice concerning this text.

SERMON XXVI.

Concerning truſt in God in Penury and Diſtreſs.

Mark viii. 1. to the 9. *In thoſe days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat,* &c.

I Hope dearly beloved, that ye do well underſtand the meaning of this text; for your underſtanding is ſufficiently well grounded in theſe myſteries, ſo that ye do eaſily perceive what good is to be looked for in the goſpel,

pel, and what is preſcribed unto us therein, namely the true nature and quality of faith. And this is the cauſe why Chriſt is of all the Evangeliſts ſet forth to be ſo loving and gentle; for although the doings and works deſcribed of them do oftentimes vary, nevertheleſs the ſimplicity of faith remaineth always alike. Moreover this text doth ſo lively ſet forth Chriſt unto us in his colours, that it may be manifeſt and well known unto every one of us, what we ought to promiſe our ſelves concerning him, to wit, that he is merciful, bountiful, gentle, who ſuccoureth all that fly unto him for help. And ſuch ought to be the image of faith; for the ſcripture ſetteth before us a double image; one of fear, which repreſenteth to our eyes the horrible wrath of God, before which no man is able to ſtand, but rather we are all enforced to be caſt down in mind, when we ſee it, unleſs we be ſtrengthened by faith. Howbeit, againſt this is ſet the other image, namely grace, which faith doth attentively behold, and taketh from hence principles of comfort, and conceiveth truſt and confidence in the favour of God, having this hope, that man cannot promiſe to himſelf from God ſo many good things, but that he hath infinite more treaſures in readineſs for him. Ye have now oftentimes heard, and there are two ſorts of good things ſpiritual and temporal. The goſpel by theſe temporal good things teacheth us the faith of children, and they are unto the weak, as a certain mean or help, whereby they may learn the goodneſs of God, how bountiful he is in beſtowing the riches upon us, and that we ought in ſpiritual things alſo to put our hope and truſt in him; for if we be now inſtructed by the goſpel, that God will give food to our belly, we may thereupon account with our ſelves, that he will nouriſh and cloath our ſouls with ſpiritual good things. If I cannot commit my body unto him that he may feed it, much leſs can I commit my ſoul unto him that he may always preſerve it; or if I cannot be brought to believe that a crown of gold ſhall be given unto me of him, how I pray you, ſhall I hope for ten crowns of gold of him? From whom I dare not promiſe to my ſelf ſo much as a

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piece of bread, truly much leſs ſhall I be perſuaded to believe, that he will give a farm unto me or his whole inheritance. Now he that is not able to attain unto this tender, as it were as yet a ſucking faith, to him ſurely it is very hard to believe, that God will pardon his ſins, or preſerve his ſoul for ever. Foraſmuch as we are perſuaded, that the ſoul is by infinite degrees to be preferred before the body, toward which notwithſtanding he is touched with compaſſion at this our preſent text teacheth; wherefore St. Peter hath rightly admoniſhed, 1 Pet. ii. 2 'As new born babes deſire the ſincere 'milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: For it is not enough that the infant being put to the breaſt do ſuck, but he muſt alſo wax greater, and gather ſtrength, that he may accuſtom himſelf to feed on bread and ſtronger meat. Now to eat milk is to taſte of the favour and grace of God, which is then taſted of, when a trial thereof is had in our life; for although I ſhould preach a hundred years of the bountifulneſs, favour, liberality and gentleneſs of God toward us, it would profit me nothing unleſs I have a trial and taſte of thoſe commodities, neither could I learn rightly to truſt in God thereby. Hereof thou mayeſt conjecture how rare a Chriſtian man is, there are many which ſay, that they commit their belly to God, but that ſticketh only in the tongue and lips, when as rather it ought to pierce the heart. Let us now conſider an example teaching us the quality and nature of faith; the apoſtle Heb. xi. 1. hath written thus. 'Now faith is the ſubſtance 'of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen.' Which is thus much in effect; faith is the foundation, whereby I look for that good thing, which is neither ſeen with the eyes, nor heard with the ears, but which I muſt only hope for; even as in our preſent text it plainly appeareth; wherein we read that there were about four thouſand men, who together with their wives and children had now ſuffered hunger three days (was not this a notable kind of faſting?) yet were not famiſhed with hunger, being far from their houſes, and deſtitute of thoſe neceſſaries, whereby the body is ſuſtained. Now St. Paul ſaith, that faith is a thing whereby

whereby a man hopeth for thoſe things which appear not to the eyes; ſuch a faith had this multitude, which although they ſee no meat, nevertheleſs they truſt in God, that he will feed them; what doth Chriſt here? he is moved with compaſſion, he demandeth of the diſciples with what victuals, or with what thing their hunger may be taken away; to whom his diſciples anſwer, whence can a man ſatisfy ſuch a multitude here in the wilderneſs? Here you ſee how a man's reaſon and faith agree together, that the wiſer reaſon is, ſo much leſs can it ſubmit itſelf to the works of God. For this cauſe therefore did he aſk his diſciples, that every one of them might try their own reaſon, and learn how much the capacity of man and faith do differ one from another.

Here it appeareth unto us how reaſon is blind, and how, when faith cometh, it ought to give place; whereof let this be an example; If I were a married man, having a wife and a company of children, and had nothing wherewith to nouriſh them, neither would any man give me any thing, yet ſhould it be my duty to believe and hope, that God will provide for me; But when as I ſee my hope to be in vain, and that I am not ſuccoured by and by with nouriſhment and cloathing, then if I be faithleſs, I yield unto deſparation, and go and purpoſe another thing with myſelf, I apply my mind to diſhoneſt trades, that I may get ſomewhat thereby, as theft, deceit, and other ſuch practices, and by all means that I am able, I paſs through the ſtorms of adverſity; ſee what filthy incredulity bringeth unto man; but if I be endued with faith, I ſhut mine eyes and ſay, Moſt gentle Father, I am thy creature, and thy work. it cannot be denied but thou haſt created me, I will put all my truſt in thee, which haſt greater care of my welfare than I myſelf. Thou wilt well nouriſh, feed, cloath, and help, where and when thou ſhalt know beſt. So faith is a ſure foundation, whereunto I truſting, do look for thoſe things which I ſee not, and that I may ſpeak at once, it ſhall not want thoſe things that be neceſſary; ſurely the angels themſelves

elves ſhould come down from heaven, and give bread digged even out of the earth, unto ſuch a faithful man, that he might be nouriſhed, rather than he ſhould be pined with hunger, yea, heaven and earth ſhall paſs, before God will ſuffer a man endued with ſuch faith to want either cloathing or any other neceſſary things. This ſingular truſt and confidence in God, the comfortable and effectual word of the divine promiſe doth require; whereof David glorieth, Pſal. xxxvii. 25 "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging bread. And again, God knoweth the days of the righteous, their inheritance ſhall continue for ever. They ſhall not be confounded in the perilous time, and in the days of dearth they ſhall have enough." But if we ſhall aſk council of reaſon, it will forthwith ſay, (as the diſciples did before) this thing is impoſſible, for it looketh for nothing, it truſteth to nothing, when nothing is preſent. Of like diffidence were the diſciples, who thought thus with themſelves; how can it be, that ſuch a great multitude of men ſhould be here refreſhed with meat? Truly it exceedeth our capacity; if they had ſeen a heap of money ſtore of bread, and ſhambles full of fleſh, they could then have eaſily believed this preſent neceſſity they could have put all in good hope, and fitly have diſpoſed all things, according to the capacities of their reaſon. And thus much ſhall ſuffice to be ſpoken concerning the faith of temporal good things. Now we will treat of ſpiritual good things, which ſhall come unto us when we ſhall die: then ſhall we ſee death ſet before our eyes, when as notwithſtanding we would willingly live, then ſhall hell appear unto us, when we rather deſire for heaven, then ſhall we behold the judgment of God, notwithſtanding his grace would be more acceptable unto us; in fine, whatſoever we would deſire to ſee, ſhall be taken out of our ſight, yea, and no creature ſhall help us againſt death, hell, and the judgment of God; But if I believe, I ſay thus unto myſelf, well, faith is a ſure foundation; herewith I being ſtayed up, ſhall attain unto thoſe things which are very far out of my ſight, altho' thoſe things be horrible which be in my ſight, yet ſhall

they not hurt him that believeth; although therefore I do presently see nothing, but death, hell and the judgment of God, yet must I consider none of these, but rather my mind is to be confirmed with an undoubted trust, that God by the virtue of his promise, not in respect of my merits or works, will give unto me life, blessedness and grace. This indeed is to cleave unto God by sincere faith, which is here very well painted forth in this gross and bodily image of four thousand men, who cleaving to God only by faith, did not doubt that they should be refreshed of him; if they had judged according to the capacity of their reason they would have murmured, and said after this sort; surely we are a very great multitude, we are here in the wide wilderness, we have empty and hungry stomacs, here is nothing that is able to fill them. Howbeit, they murmured of none of these things, but conceiving a sure confidence, reasoning nothing against God after the affection of men, they commend themselves wholly to the good will of God, and commit unto him this urgent necessity of hunger, they themselves being quiet from all care; then God, before this care cometh upon them, and before they begin to ask of him, is present, being more careful for them, than they are for themselves, and saith on this sort, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way.' Behold how gentle and bountiful we have God toward us, who hath even a care to feed the unclean belly. Here now our hope is erected, and the words of Christ are comfortable to a man, when he saith; They have now continued with me three days, it now behoveth me to give sufficient unto them to eat. Here we may see, that all that do stick diligently to the word of God, are fed of God himself; wherefore let us dearly beloved, at the last begin to believe, for only diffidence and incredulity is the mother of all sins and vices, which at this day reign in all sorts of men. How cometh it to pass, that every where, whethersoever we turn us, there are so many harlots and bauds, such plenty of deluders and deceivers,

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so many thieves, pilferers, usurers, robbers, simonists, as they call them, and sellers of benefices, all these diffidence toward God bringeth forth unto us; for such kind of men do judge only according to human reason, and reason looketh unto that which is present; but that which it seeth not, it is not able to comprehend; wherefore, while it doth not repose her trust by faith in God, it is inforced to despair, which desperation afterward causeth such naughty and wicked men. Behold thus it goeth out of frame with us, when we commit ourselves to be ruled, not by faith, but by our own reason. Moreover as ye have now learned faith, so must ye also learn love; for Christ is set forth unto us in a double form, in one, of faith, that we should not be over careful; in another, of love, that we may learn, that as he hath care of us, giving us meat, drink, apparel, and that of meer and bountiful love, not for his own advantage sake, or because of our merits; so also we ought to do well to our neighbour, and that freely, only love moving us thereunto, that as Christ is to us, so we may be to our neighbour. Hereupon now we may perceive, that all works of monks and nuns are vain and to be utterly disallowed, when they are not directed to that end, that they may serve their neighbour, but are ordained only unto this end, that they may merit much at God's hands by them; for the true works of Christians, which they desire to be accepted of God, must be done so, that they tend to the profit of our neighbour, and not to this end, that we should think that we shall merit many things of God by them, they must be cheerfully and freely bestowed upon all, even as Christ hath done, who hath spread abroad and freely bestowed his goodness upon all. These things have I briefly spoken concerning this text, that ye may thereby learn that God requireth this especially of us, that we do firmly and constantly trust in him, and that we freely do good and be beneficial to our neighbours, according as God hath of his meer goodness and mercy bestowed infinite benefits and blessing upon us; the prophet saith, Psal. l. 7. "Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O

Iſrael, and I will teſtify againſt thee; I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy ſacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy houſe, nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beaſt of the foreſt is mine, and the cattle upon a thouſand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beaſts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulneſs thereof. Will I eat the fleſh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" After the ſame ſort he ſaith unto us: Behold Iſrael, that is, thou faithful man, I am thy God, thou art not my God, I will give unto thee, thou giveſt nothing to me, I will not be angry with thee, for that thou offereſt not many things unto me; for whatſoever is in thy ſtable, in thy houſes, in thy court, it was all mine before, for I have ſent it thither, whereby he briefly reproveth the Jews, who did marvellouſly pleaſe themſelves in their ſacrifices. Now becauſe he rejecteth theſe ſacrifices, what will he have to ſupply the place of them? truly even that which followeth in the ſame place: 'Offer unto God thankſgiving, and pay thy 'vows unto the moſt high. And call upon me in the 'day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thouſhalt glori-'fy me.' This is I will have thine heart, give over thy ſelf to me, and account me for a gentle, favourable, yea, and for thy God, and it ſhall ſuffice me. Wherefore place thy faith, truſt and hope in him, count him for a gentle and loving God, cleave unto him, and in extream anguiſh fly unto him for ſuccour, and to none beſide him; believe and look for help of him, that he will help thee, thou needeſt not any whit doubt; afterward do good to thy neighbour with a cheerful heart and freely. Theſe two things are ſet forth in this our text, as alſo in many other places beſide.

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SERMON XXVII.

God's Puniſhments againſt the Contemners of his Word.

Luke xix. 41. to the 48. *And when he was come, he beheld the city, and wept over it, &c.*

THE ſum and ſcope of this text is this: The Lord is troubled, and lamenteth for the evils which were to come upon the contemners of the word of God. Ye have oftentimes heard, what the word of God is, what is the fruit and advantage thereof, alſo what diſciples it hath, of which nothing is ſaid or done; but the puniſhment and miſery only is ſhewed, which was to come upon the Jews, for that they knew not the time of their viſitation. Which thing let us well conſider of, for it pertaineth unto us alſo. If they be puniſhed which know not the time of their viſitation, what ſhall come unto them which perſecute, blaſpheme and reprehend the goſpel and word of God? Howbeit he ſpeaketh here only of them which know not the ſeaſon of their viſitation. The contemners of God are preached againſt after two ſorts: Firſt by threatnings, as Chriſt threatneth them, Mat. xi. 21. "Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethſaida: for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in ſackcloth and aſhes But I ſay unto you It ſhall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou Capernaum, (which was his own city, wherein chiefly he wrought miracles) which are exalted unto heaven, ſhalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sidon, it would have remained until this day. But I ſay unto you, that it ſhall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, then for thee." Theſe are the threatnings wherewith he terrifieth them that they ſhould not ſo neglect the word of God. The other way the Lord hereſheweth when he ſheddeth tears

and is touched with pity towards miſerable and blind men he doth not terrify or threaten them, as being indurate and obſtinate, but is rather wholly moved with love, and taketh pity on his enemies, and would willingly call them back, but that he could prevail nothing with them, and the means which he uſed to reclaim them were in vain. Before in Matthew, he ſharply rebuketh them, he dealeth not by love, but by rigour, but here is pure love and pity, as we ſhall afterwards ſee.

First, when he drew near to the city, ſome went before him, and ſome followed him, with great joy ſinging and ſaying, 'Hoſanna to the Son of David,' they ſpread their garments in the way they cut down branches from the trees, and ſtrawed them in the way, and all things were done after a goodly manner, but in the midſt of this joy, Chriſt beginneth greatly to weep he ſuffereth all to rejoice, notwithſtanding his eyes guſhed out with tears when he beheld the city and ſaid, 'If thou 'hadſtknown,even thou,at leaſt in this thy day,the things 'which belong unto thy peace! but now theyare hidfrom 'thine eyes.' As if the Lord ſhould ſay, O, if thou kneweſt what belongeth unto thy peace, that thou mighteſt not be deſtroyed, but ſtand ſtill, thou wouldeſt yet at this day conſider of it and beware. Now it were time for thee to know that which ſhould be beſt for thee, but thou art blind, and wilt neglect the time, then ſhall there be no place neither for help nor counſel. As if he ſaid, Thou ſtandeſt here adorned with ſumptuous and goodly buildings, and there are in thee mighty citizens, which are both ſecure and merry, thinking that no danger hangeth over them, but after the ſpace of forty years thou ſhall be deſtroyed. Which the Lord plainly foretelleth in theſe words.

"The daysſhall come upon thee,that thine enemiesſhall caſt a trench about thee,and compaſs thee round,and keep thee in on everyſide,andſhall laythee evenwiththeground, and thy children within thee; and they ſhall not leave in theeone ſtone uponanother: becauſe thouknoweſt not the time of thy viſitation." Now the Jews as they ſuppoſed, ſtood unmovable and ſafe, reſting upon the promiſe of God, ſo that they thought no otherwiſe but that they

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should continue so for ever, they were secure and thought thus with themselves, God will not send such things unto us; we have the temple wherein God himself is resident, we have also plenty of excellent men, money, and other things, who can do any hurt or harm to us? moreover the emperor and people of Rome having takenthe city, seeing it furnished with so many excellent buildings, marvelled greatly, and confessed thatitwas impossible that so great a city should be taken, unless it had been the special will of God. Their boasting therefore and confidence in their own false opinion deceived them; howbeit the Lord did more earnestly and deeply consider the matter, than they when he said, O Jerusalem, if thou knewest those things that are known to me, thou wouldest have a care of thy peace: (peace in the scriptures is, when the matters and affairs of any have good success,) thou thinkest that thou hast glad and merry days, that it is well with thee and that thy affairs are in a prosperous state; but if thou knewest how thine enemies shall by siege afflict thee keep thee in on every side, and bring thee into such distress, that they shall lay thee even with the ground, destroy all thy buildings, and leave not one stone upon another, thou wouldest surely conveniently receive the word, whereby thou mightest enjoy both true peace and all good things. The reading of the history of the destruction of this city doth help much to the right understanding of this text. God had plainly so ordained, that at the feast of Easter, at which time they came to Jerusalem out of all quarters, the city should be besieged, and there were then gathered together as Josephus reporteth, about thirty hundred thousand men, upon whom the Lord would shew his grievous indignation and wrath. All the apostles andChristians were departed andgone into the country of Herod, not far from Jerusalem. The Lord took out the wheat and put the chaff together on an heap, now there was so great a multitude of people, that they might seem to exceed not only a city, but even a kingdom. And they were driven into so great calamity, that all their victuals were spent, and none at all left unto them, so that they were constrained to eat the

strings of their bows, and old shoes, dressing them in such manner as they could, yea through the exceeding famine, they were driven to kill their own children: the soldiers took the flesh of children roasted from the mothers, smelling the savour of the roasted flesh two streets off; Pigeons dung was unto them instead of salt, and was also very dear: finally, there was so great misery, so great slaughter, and shedding of Blood, that it would not have been marvellous for a stone to have been moved with pity. He that had seen it, would have thought that God could not have been so griveously angry, and so greatly have afflicted a poople. Both houses and streets were filled with carcases dead through famine; notwithstanding the Jews remained still so obstinate and without understanding, that they gloried of God, and would not yield themselves until the emperor set upon them with his whole power and took the city, which they were able to keep no longer. And when as some of them were so crafty that they devoured gold that it might not be taken from them, the Roman soldiers thought that they had also so done, whereupon they slew about two thousand, and having ript their bellies sought for gold. There was such a slaughter made, that it seemed a miserable thing even to the Gentiles; wherefore Cæsar commanded that they should not be so slain, but led captive and sold. The Jews were then sold so cheap, that thirty were bought for a penny, they were then dispersed through the whole world, and were counted the most abject people of all other, as also at this day they are the most contemptible nation on the earth. For they live spread here and there without cities and countries of their own, neither can they again be gathered into one place, so that they shall never be able any more to erect their priesthood and kingdom, as they hope they shall. Thus God revenged the death of Christ, and all the prophets, thus were they recompensed for that they knew not the time of their visitation. Wherefore let us be here admonished, for it belongeth not only unto us, but even unto all Germany, it is no jesting matter of sport, neither is there any cause why we should persuade ourselves that it will fall out otherwise with us. The Jews would not believe that

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evil ſhould come upon them until they had ſufficiently tried it. And we at this day are viſited by the goodneſs of God: he hath opened unto us a treaſure, his ſacred and holy Goſpel, whereby we know his will, and ſee how much we were ſubject to the power of Satan: but no man will receive this goſpel, yea we contemn it, and that which is more miſerable, we perſecute and blaſpheme it: God is patient, it pleaſeth him to try us a while, if we be not watchful, ſo that the word be again taken from us, the ſame wrath and indignation which was poured forth upon the Jews, ſhall alſo be poured forth upon us. For there is the ſame word, the ſame God, the ſame Chriſt at this day, that there was at that time, whereupon undoubtedly the puniſhment ſhall be the ſame, or at leaſt as grievous both in ſoul and body. We make a ſport and trifling manner of the goſpel, for no man embraceth it from his heart, no man frameth his manners according unto it, which is a manifeſt argument of blindneſs; a thing ſurely moſt miſerable; I fear leſt the matter will ſhortly come to paſs, that all Germany will fall together on an heap, which, alas! in part of the commonality hath already had a lamentable beginning; we have loſt a great multitude of people, almoſt an hundred thouſand men have been ſlain only between the feaſt of Eaſter and Whitſuntide. It is hard work of God, and I am afraid that the war begun is not yet at an end; this is only a forewarning and threatning whereby God would terrify us, that we might diligently take heed to ourſelves: it was nothing but the Fox's tail, if he come again with his whip he will ſcourge us more grievouſly: but we will behave ourſelves as the Jews behaved themſelves, until there be place for no ſuccour or help; now we might prevent it, now is the time to know what ſhould be beſt for us, and to receive the goſpel with peace, for at this day grace is offered unto us, whereby we may live peaceably, but we ſuffer day to paſs after day, year after year, applying ourſelves leſs to the goſpel than before: no man doth now pray unto God for the increaſe of his word, no man receiveth it in his heart; if ſo be that the time ſhall paſs, no prayers ſhall any more help. We might not this matter in

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our heart, we think ourselves safe, we do not throughly perceive the great misery already come to pass, neither do we consider in our minds how miserably God punisheth us with false prophets and sects, which he on every side sendeth unto us, which preach so securely, as if they had wholly received into their breast the spirit the comforter: those which we counted best of all do go away, and bring men into such a perplexity, that they almost know not either what is to be done or not to be done. But this is only the beginning, altho' sufficient horrible and cruel; for there cannot be greater affliction and misery, than if the Lord send amongst us sects and false prophets, which are so rash and bold, that it is greatly to be lamented; notwithstanding the time of grace is now present: Christ hath been sent down into the world, hath been born man, hath served us, died for us, is risen again from the dead, hath sent unto us the spirit the comforter, hath given unto us his word, hath opened heaven so wide, that all good things may be obtained of us, moreover hath given unto us rich promises, whereby he promiseth that he will preserve us both in this short and frail time, and in the eternal time, in this life, and in the life to come, must plentifully pouring forth his grace upon us. Wherefore the time of grace is now before our doors, but we despise and neglect it, which God neither will, neither can pardon: for when we contemn his word he threatneth punishment, and will at the last punish us, although he should defer it even an hundred years, but he will not defer it so long. And the more purely that the word is preached, so much greater shall the punishment be. But I fear lest this punishment require the subversion of all Germany: God grant that in this thing I be a false prophet but I fear exceedingly that it will come to pass, God cannot leave this wickedness unrevenged, neither will he defer long, for the gospel is so abundantly preached, that it was not so manifest even in the Apostles time as it is at this day, thanks be to Christ therefore. Wherefore I fear much, lest that all Germany be spoiled, yea, and quite destroyed, unless we otherwise apply ourselves to this matter. We which have long heard the gospel ought to pray God from

the heart, that he would give us longer peace. The Princes go about to bring allthings to paſs by theſword, whereby they go too raſhly and rigorouſly to work; wherefore it is exceeding needful that we ſhould pray unto God, that his goſpel may ſpread farther abroad through Germany, even unto them which have not yet heard it. For if puniſhment come ſuddenly upon us, our caſe ſhall be miſerable, than many ſouls ſhall be in danger to be loſt before theword ſhall come unto them; I would wiſh therefore, that we would not ſo cruelly deſpiſe the goſpel, that precious treaſure, not only for our own ſake, but alſo for their ſakes which are yet to hear it: a ſcourge is a little begun, God grant that it may ſo ſtay, that neither the princes nor the commonality be ſtirred up to greater rage and fury; for if that civil war ſhould begin again, it were to be feared that it would have no end. We do like as the Jews did, who took greater care of the belly than of God, having more regard how to fill the belly, than that they might be ſaved, wherefore they loſt both, and that worthily; foraſmuch as they would not receive life, God ſent unto them death, ſo they loſt both body and ſoul: they pretended the ſame cauſe that we do: we would willingly indeed embrace the goſpel, if there were no danger of body and goods, wife and children. If we ſhall believe him, ſaid the Jews, the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation, which nevertheleſs came unto them: for that which the wicked man feareth falleth upon him. This was a let and hindrance to the Jews that they would not believe the words of God, neither have regard to the rich and large promiſes made unto them: ſo alſo do we, we regard not the mighty and comfortable promiſes which Chriſt hath made unto us, as where he ſaith, Matth. xix. 29. 'He 'ſhall receive an hundred fold,' and ſhall inherit ever-'laſting life.' Leave thy wife and children, I will preſerve them, I will reſtore them, ſo as thou goeſt to work boldly in my name; thinkeſt thou that I cannot build thee other houſes? counteſt thou me ſo ſimple, who will give unto thee heaven? wilt thou not put thyſelf into danger for my ſake? if thy goods be taken from thee, heaven and earth are mine, I will recompenſe thee

abundantly. These and such like sayings we pass over, yea and also contemn, having diligent consideration only what we have laid up in our chest, and that our purse may be full, neither do we see that even that which we have, God hath given unto us, and will as yet give us more, if we believe and trust in him, neither do we mark if that we lose God we shall lose the belly also.

Howbeit they that believe in God, do not avoid peril if it come for his sake, but commit all things to his divine power, that he may order them according to his will, and thus they think: The Lord hath given me both a house and the furniture thereof, wife, children, &c. I have not obtained them of myself forasmuch then as they are God's, I will commit them unto him, he shall best preserve them; for even otherwise I must leave them, wherefore I will refuse to suffer no peril, and to leave whatsoever I have for his sake, if the case so require. If he will have me so to do, he can give me other things, for he hath promised that he will give sufficient to them that believe, both here and in the time to come. If he will not have me to live here, I owe death unto him, when he shall require me, I will be ready for his word's sake. He that shall not do thus, denieth God, and is notwithstanding compelled to lose both this frail life and eternal life. The stinking belly which we make our god, is the cause that we do not cleave to the word of God: for I will first be certain how I may feed myself, and where my gods be. The gospel saith, 'Trust in God,' but I provide for my belly, and if I have one noble in gold, I think I have sufficient to sustain and nourish me for ten days, and trusting to that which I have laid up, I trust not in God, that as he hath hitherto fed me, so he will nourish me still. Is not this a detestable thing, that I trust to one piece of coin only, whereby I look to have my food and sustenance to morrow? Fie, what a cursed thing is such care for the belly? Shall a vile piece of coin be more esteemed of me than God himself, in whose power are heaven and earth, who giveth unto us air and water, maketh grain to grow unto us, and sendeth all things necessary? It is more detestable than that it can be expressed by the voice

voice of man, that God is not eſteemed of us ſo much as a little money. Why doſt thou not think, God who hath made me will nouriſh me, if he will have me live. If he will not, well, then ſhall I have no need. But ſaith the belly, I find no god in my cheſt, Thou fooliſh aſs, who can aſſure thee that thou ſhalt live till to morrow? It is uncertain whether thou ſhalt keep thy belly till to-morrow, and deſireſt thou to know where food and ſuſtenance is? If this did pierce our heart, we ſhould ſee how deviliſh a thing incredulity is. It is not a horrible thing that I do not make ſo great account of God, who feedeth ſo many mouths, as to truſt in him, that he will nouriſh me, yea that I do make more account of one noble in gold than of God himſelf, who poureth forth his good things ſo abundantly? The world is full of the bleſſings and works of God, he is on every ſide with his good things, notwithſtanding we do not yet commit ourſelves to him, to receive his viſitation. O curſed world, which cannot truſt to God even one day, and yet truſteth to a piece of gold. Thus we ſee, as I think, of what ſort the world is, how it deſpiſeth God for the belly's ſake, which notwithſtanding it is compelled to loſe. O how great contemners of ſalvation are we? We ought rather to deteſt the world, but we are deeply drowned in old Adam. The world is as it were a figure of hell, yea a very deviliſh kingdom, and an entrance to hell; wherefore Chriſt with weeping eyes exhorteth us to know our ſalvation, and to receive his viſitation, leſt that a plague and ſcourge follow, which undoubtedly ſhall come upon them, which thinking themſelves in ſafety, do not believe and truſt in God. God give us his grace, whereby we may know him. It followeth moreover in the text Ver. 45. "And he went into thetemple,and began to caſtout themthat ſoldtherein, and them that bought, ſaying unto them, It is written, My houſe is the houſe of prayer: but yehave made it a den of thieves." This is the ſecond part of this text, wherein is declared how the Lord going into the temple, beginneth to drive out the buyers and ſellers therein. The former part was nothing elſe but an exhortation and inviting to faith, but here the Lord inſinuateth what the

temple

temple of God is, and bringeth a place out of the scripture hereunto appertaining, namely out of Isaiah, where he saith, chap. lv. 7. 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.' This is a strong saying, whereas the Prophet saith, 'for all people' against the Jews, who trusting unto that temple at Jerusalem, thought that this house made with hands, should continue for ever, supposing it to be impossible that God should either destroy this temple, or leave the city desolate, because the word of God cannot lie. Wherefore they stoned Stephen, for that he spake against that holy city, and affirmed that Jesus would destroy it, and change the ceremonies given by Moses; for they said, The prophets have greatly praised this house, and do you apostles preach that it shall be destroyed? Howbeit this saying is thus to be understood, that the city Jerusalem, the temple, and the people should continue until the time of Christ, whereunto all the prophets tend, which referred all things unto Christ, that as he should do, so it should be, and so it should continue. Wherefore the place of Isaiah extendeth no farther than to the coming of Christ, which all the prophets also witness, affirming that there should come a kingdom which should extend far and wide over the whole world, as it is in Malachi i. 11. "From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering! for my name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." Here the prophet speaketh of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, who would build unto himself an house of prayer in the whole world. It is true that God himself did confirm and sanctify the temple at Jerusalem, not because it was furnished with precious stones and goodly buildings, or hallowed of the priests, which manner of trifles and dotages we use at this day, but because he had consecrated and hallowed it with his word, when he said, This house is my house; for his word was preached in it. Whersoever the word of God is preached, there is his true house; where the word of God hath his course and proceeding, there undoubtedly

God

God dwelleth with his grace; where his gospel is, there is the holy house of prayer, there prayers both may and ought to be made unto God. God also will hear us, as Christ saith, John xvi. 23. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the 'Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have 'ye asked nothing in my name: ask and ye shall receive.' On the contrary, where the word is not, there is Satan wholly. Now, whereas we imitating the Jews have builded so many temples, it were tolerable if we had therefore so done that the word of God might be preached in them, for where God's word is preached there is he present, and poureth forth his grace. Christ saith that the Jews had made the temple at Jerusalem a den of thieves. They were resident in the temple which sold oxen and sheep, that they which came might buy to offer and worship God: why therefore doth he call it a den of thieves? Surely he giveth unto it a foul name, which came to pass upon this occasion; for that it was not any more counted of them for the house of God, but for a house of merchandize, that is, the priests had no care how the word of God was preach'd there, and did negligently and carelessly sing, babble, and read Moses and the prophets. But God doth nothing esteem that mumbling of many words, which is only vain and childish. They behaved themselves like as our sacrificing priests and monks do, who of temples and monasteries making dens of thieves, preach poisonous doctrine, and therefore only they celebrate mass, that they may thereby get unto themselves money, and fill the belly, killing and destroying silly sheep with their traditions; which is the den wherein souls are slain; which title is to be given to all temples wherein the word of God is not preached: for there they mock God, kill souls, expel the true word, and set up thievery. O how foully have we been deceived in this point? But God at this day is highly to be praised, that his word reneweth and quickeneth us, driveth away thieves, and teacheth us to pray aright; for a sincere Christian, must pray not in mouth only, but in heart also. Thus we have the second part of our text, how Christ casteth out the sellers, that is, them that served the belly, and maketh

place

place for his word. It were very good if monasteries were scoured after this sort; that either Christian schools, or places wherein the word of God might be preached, might be made of them; which if it come not to pass, they are, and do remain dens of thieves. If Christ calleth his house a den of thieves, how much more shall our temples, which God hath not consecrated, be proved to be dens of thieves? I have oftentimes desired you, that ye would devoutly pray unto God that he turning away his indignation, would bridle the devil, who now rageth in the world; for ye have heard of a great calamity, how many thousands have been slain, it is to be feared that they are all damned. God requireth obedience of us, and he hath pronounced the sentence, that he that taketh the sword, shall perish with the sword They were besieged of Satan, who knoweth whether the same shall come unto us? Let us pray God therefore that his kingdom may come unto us, that Christians may be multiplied, and that he will send wise and meek preachers, whom the people may receive and obey. Let him that knoweth the gift of God, pray for others which have not yet heard the word of God; for it is high time so to do.

SERMON XXVIII.

The Difference between the Law and the Gospel.

Luke x. 23. to the 37. *And he turned him unto his disciples and said privately, &c.*

I Hope well that ye do now rightly understand this gospel, forasmuch as it is preached every year; notwithstanding, because occasion is now again offered, we must again treat and preach of it. First the Evangelist saith, that Christ took his disciples aside, and said unto them secretly after this sort: 'Blessed are the eyes which 'see the things, that ye see. For I tell you, that many prophets

'phets and kings have desired to see those things which ye 'see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which 'ye hear, and have not heard them.' To see and hear is to be understood here simply of the outward seeing and hearing, viz. that they saw Christ come in the flesh, heard his sermons, and were present at those miracles which he did among the Jews. The Jews saw the same according to the flesh, yea and felt them also; yet did they not truly acknowledge him for Christ, as the apostles did, and especially Peter in the name of all the rest did confess, him saying, 'Thou art Christ the Son of the living 'God.' We grant indeed, that there were some among the Jews which acknowledged him, as the apostles did, but the number of them was very small wherefore he taketh his apostles here severally unto himself. Many prophets and kings have seen Christ, howbeit in the spirit, as the Lord himself saith to the Jews of Abraham, John viii. 56. 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and 'he saw it, and was glad.' The Jews thought then that he had spoken of the bodily seeing, but he spake of the spiritual seeing, whereby all Christian hearts did behold him before he was born; for if Abraham saw him, undoubtedly many other of the prophets, in whom the Holy Ghost was, saw him also. And although this seeing saved the holy fathers and prophets, yet did they always with most inward and hearty affection desire to see Christ in the flesh also, as is commonly shewed in the prophets. Wherefore the Lord saith here unto his disciples, which saw him both in the flesh and in the spirit, 'blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see.' As if he said, Now is the acceptable year and time of grace. The matter which is now in hand is so weighty and precious, that the eyes are worthily said to be blessed, which see it; for now was the gospel preached openly and manifestly both by Christ himself, and also by his apostles, whereupon he here calleth them all blessed which see and hear such grace. Of which grace I have preached much and a long time to you, I would to God ye did keep that which I have spoken thereof, fresh in memory.

When the Lord spake these things, a certain lawyer started up, shewing himself as though he had been something, who tempting the Lord saith, 'Master, what shall 'I do toinherit eternal life?' This lawyerwas enduedwith wisdom,and not unskilful in the scriptures, which even his answer doth declare, yet in this place he is proved a fool, yea he is brought unto shame and ignominy; for Christ taketh away all his glorying even in one word. He was of this mind, that he had observed the whole law, and that he was a certain chief one in respect of others, as undoubtedly he was, and thought himself sufficiently worthy by reason of his godliness and learning to be conversant with the Lord. But what doth the Lord in this case? The text following declareth,Ver. 26. "He said unto him,What is writtenin the law? howreadest thou? And he answering,said,Thou shalt love theLord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do,and thou shalt live" Methinks that the Lord gave this good man a hard lesson; he dealeth very streightly with him, it may seem to some that he should have spared him a little he putteth him to shame openly before all; he proveth that he had done nothing, who notwithstanding thought that he had done all things. He asked what he should do; but I think he had enough and overmuch to do, if he had been able to do more than he was. If I had time, many things might be spoken of the two commandments; for they are the chief and greatest commandments in Moses, on which the whole law and all the prophets do hang, as Christ himself saith in Matthew, chap. xxii. 40. Notwithstanding we will treat somewhat of them. If we consider the commandments of Moses they have respect altogether unto love; for this commandment,Exod. xx. 3. 'Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,' we can no otherwise declare or interpret than, Thou shalt love God alone; so Moses expoundeth them in Deuteronomy where he saith thus, Deut. vi. 4. 5 'Hear O Israel, the 'LordourGod is one Lord. And thou shalt love theLord 'thy God with all thine heart,and with all thy soul, and

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'with all thy might:' From whence the lawyer took his answer. But the Jews understand this commandment so, that they think it to extend no farther than that they should not set up nor worship idols. And if they can say and witness in mouth, that they have one God only and do worship none but him, they think they have observed this commandment. After the same sort did this lawyer understand it, but that was an evil and a wrong understanding thereof. Howbeit we must otherwise consider and understand this precept, 'Thou shalt have 'no other Gods before me.' Thou, it saith, with all that thou art, but especially it requireth all thine heart, soul and strength. It speaketh not of the tongue, not of the hand, not of the knees, but of the whole man, whatsoever thou art and hast. That no other God may be worshipped of me, it shall be necessary that I have the true and only God in my heart, that is, I must love him from mine heart, so that I do always depend on him, trust in him, repose my hope in him, have my pleasure, love and joy in him, and daily remember him; even as otherwise if we take pleasure in any thing, we say, it doth me good inwardly at the heart. And if any speaketh or laugheth, and doth it not in good earnest, neither from his heart, we are wont to say, Thou laugheſt indeed, but it cometh not from thy heart. The love of the heart in the scriptures signifieth a vehement and special love, which we ought to bear toward God; they which serve God with mouth, hands, and knees only, are hypocrites, neither hath God any care of them; for God will not have part, but the whole. The Jews did outwardly abstain from idolatry, and served God alone in mouth, but their heart was far removed from him, being full of diffidence and unbelief. Outwardly they seemed to be very earnest in serving God, but within they were full of idolatry. whereupon the Lord said unto them, Mat. xxiii. 27. "Wo unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for yeare like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." These are

thoſe wicked ones, which glory of the outward thing, which go about to juſtify and make themſelves good by their own works, after the manner of the lawyer. Conſider how great the pride of this aſs was, he cometh forth as though he could not be blamed, or rebuked of the Lord, he thought, yea it ſeemed unto him, that the Lord would here commend and praiſe his life before the people; he thought not to learn any thing of the Lord, but he ſought only his own commendation, he would willingly have had Chriſt ſet forth his praiſe, toward whom the eyes of all were bent, and who was an admiration to all. So all hypocrites do, outwardly they pretend excellent, great and weighty works; they ſay that they have reſpect neither to glory nor praiſe, but within in their heart they are full of ambition, and wiſh that their holineſs were known to the whole world, ſhewing a goodly ſign of their religion, by the biting of their lip, if they hear any ſpeak thereof. But our Saviour Chriſt ſheweth here no kindneſs or gentleneſs to this lawyer, inaſmuch as he putteth them to ſhame; that great holy man notwithſtanding continueth ſtill in the ſame mind, and ſuppoſeth that he ſhall receive great honour and ſingular praiſe becauſe of his precious life, thinking that he had fulfilled the commandment, whereupon alſo he looketh for a joyful anſwer, that the Lord ſhould ſay, good maſter, your maſterſhip hath done all things. But Chriſt anſwereth him, Do this,' which indeed is as much to ſay as, thou art altogether a naughty fellow, thou haſt never in all thy life fulfilled ſo much as one letter thereof. ſo ſhewing unto him how evil and naughty he was. Like unto this lawyer are all they which do moſt grievouſly offend againſt the firſt commandment, and think that God is to be loved, no more than the words found for, and that thereby it is fulfilled; the commandment therefore remaineth in their mouth, and doth as it were float above the heart, and pierceth it not: but I muſt go much farther than ſo, I muſt love God ſo, that I can be content to forſake all creatures for his ſake, and if it ſhall ſeem good unto him, my body and life, I muſt love him above all things, for he

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is jealous, and cannot suffer that any thing be loved above him, but under him he pertaineth us to love any thing. Even as the husband can suffer that his wife love her maids, the house, household things, chattels and such like, howbeit he suffereth her not to love any with that love wherewith she is bound unto him, but himself, yea he will have her leave all such things for his sake. Again the wife requireth the same of her husband. After the same sort God can suffer that we love his creatures, yea therefore they are created and are good: The sun is a goodly creature, gold and silver, and whatsoever by nature is fair, procureth us to love it, which maketh it dear unto us, neither is God offended thereat. But that I should cleave unto the creature, and love it equally with him, that neither will be, neither can he suffer; yea he will have me both to deny and forsake all these things, when he requireth it of me, and will have me content, although I never see the sun, money, riches, &c. The love of creatures must be far inferior to the love which we must bear toward him. As he is the sovereign good, so will he also be chiefly loved before all other good things; if he will not suffer that I shall love any thing equally with him, much less will be suffer that I shall love any thing above him. Thou seest now I think, what it is to love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all thy mind. To love God with all thy heart is, to love God above all creatures, that is although creatures be very amiable and dear unto me, and that I take great delight in them, yet must I so love them, that I do contemn and forsake them, when my God and Lord requireth that of me. To love God with all the soul, is to bestow our whole life and body at his pleasure; if the love of creatures, or any temptation assail thee, or would overcome thee, thou mayest say, I will rather part from all these, than I will forsake my God, whether he cast me off, or kill me, or drown me, or whatsoever, through his promission, shall come unto me, I had rather leave all things than him, I will depend on my Lord, rather than upon all creatures, or upon any other thing whatsoever it be. Whatsoever I have and am, I will bestow, but him will

I not forſake, the ſoul in the ſcriptures ſignifieth the life of the body, and whatſoever is done by the five ſenſes, as to eat, drink, ſleep, wake, ſee, hear, ſmell, taſte, and whatſoever the ſoul worketh by the body. To love God with all the ſtrength, is for God's cauſe to renounce all the members and limbs of the body, ſo that one will peril whatſoever he is able in his fleſh and body, before he will commit that which is againſt God. To love God with all the mind, is to enterprize nothing but that which may pleaſe God, whereby he underſtandeth the thought which is in man, that that alſo be referred to God, and all things that be acceptable unto him. Thou perceiveſt not what this comandment of God containeth in it. Thou ſhalt love God, thou, thou ſaith he, and that wholly even every part of thee, not thy hands, not thy mouth, not thy knees alone. They which do theſe things, as it is ſaid, do truly fulfil it: but no man liveth in the earth which doth ſo, yea we do all otherwiſe. Wherefore the law doth here make us all ſinners, ſo that not ſo much as the leaſt jot or point thereof is fulfilled of them that are moſt holy of all in the world. For no man doth ſo cleave with all his heart unto God, that he can leave all things for his ſake. We alas are gone ſo far, that we cannot ſuffer ſo much as a little word, nay we will not forgoe the value of a half-penny for God's cauſe. How can it be that we ſhould love God, when his will is not ſettled in our mind? If I love God I cannot but love his will alſo. Now if God ſend ſickneſs, poverty, ſhame and ignominy, it is his will, whereas what do we? we murmur, we grudge, our mind is carried hither and thither, we take moſt impatiently, and yet is this the leaſt? what would we do, if we ſhould leave our body and life for God and Chriſt his ſake? then would we ſhew ourſelves after another ſort. But in the mean time we do like unto this Phariſee and lawyer, we lead an honeſt life outwardly, we worſhip God, we ſerve him, we faſt, we pray and behave ourſelves in outward appearance, juſtly and holily: But God doth not require that of us, but that we ſhould bend ourelves to do his will with pleaſure and love, chearfully and lovingly. Whatſoever

the Lord saith to the lawyer, he saith to us all, to wit, that we have yet done nothing, but that all things do yet remain to be done. All men therefore are guilty of death and subject to Satan. All men are liars, vain, filthy, and whatsoever they pretend, it is nothing worth. We are wise in our own matters, that we may scrape together money and goods, and we can speak most sweetly and fairly before men, and cunningly propound or set forth our matter. What doth God care for these things? he requireth of us that we love him with our whole heart, which no man living is able to perform, whereupon of this place is inferred, that we are all sinners, but especially they, whose life hath a goodly outward shew only. This is the former part of this text, namely, the preaching of the law: now followeth the other part, which is the preaching of the gospel, which declareth how we may fulfil the law, and from whence that fulfilling is to be taken, which we shall learn of the Samaritan. What doth the lawyer after that the Lord had thus dealt with him? he, saith the Evangelist, willing to justify himself, spake unto the Lord, and asked him as followeth, 'Who is then my neighbour?' he asked not who is my God? as if he said, I owe nothing unto God, neither do I want any thing before God, yea it seemeth unto me, that I do neither owe any thing to any man; nevertheless I would willingly know who is my neighbour. The Lord answering him, bringeth forth a most goodly similitude, whereby he declareth that we are all neighbours one to another, as well he that giveth a benefit, as he that receiveth and needeth one; although by the text it seemeth to appear, that he only is a neighbour, which bestoweth a benefit upon another, But the scripture maketh here no difference, sometime calling him our neighbour, which bestoweth a benefit, sometime him that receiveth a benefit. By this similitude the Lord inferreth in these words, 'Go and do thou 'likewise,' so that the lawyer had offended not only against God, but also against man, and wanted not only love towards God, but also love towards his neighbour, unto whom he had not done that good which he ought. This wretched fellow is brought into such a case, that

he is found wholly evil, even from the head to the feet. How came it to pass that he being most skilful of the scripture could not beware of this? So fell it out: he led a pharisaical, hypocritical, and counterfeit life, which had not regard unto his neighbour; and to succour and help others, but sought thereby only glory and honour before men, and so looked by negligent and dissolute living to come to heaven. But ye have heard very often. that a Christian life consisteth in this, that we deal with faith and the heart in things that pertain unto God, but use our life and works towards our neighbour; and that I must not look while my neighbour seeketh a benefit, and requireth something of me, but according to my duty must prevent his asking, and of mine own accord offer my liberality unto him. Now we will see what the parable containeth in it, The Samaritan in this place is, without all doubt, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath declared his love toward God and man: toward God, in that he descended from heaven, and was incarnate, and so fulfilled the will of his Father. Toward man, for that by and by after baptism, he began to preach, to work miracles, to heal the sick, neither was there any work that he did which did concern himself only, but all his works were directed to his neighbour, being made our minister, notwithstanding he is above all, and equal to God; but he did all these things, for that he knew that they did please God, and that it was the will of his father. When he had ascended to the height of the commandment, that he loved God with all his heart, he left and committed the life of his body, and whatsoever he had to the pleasure and will of his Father saying, Father, behold all things that I have, my life and soul are ready at thy will; I leave for thy sake the glory and honour which I have had among men, yea and all things how good soever they be, that the world may understand how greatly I love thee: my Father let for thy sake my wisdom be contemned, that the world may count me for the foolishest of all; now make I myself most contemptible of all other, who was before praised of the whole world now I am as a wicked thief, who before was liberal, profitable;

profitable, and beneficial to the whole world: my Father, I make no account of all these things, that I may be found obedient to thy will. This is that Samaritan who being desired by no prayers, came and fulfilled the law with his whole heart, he alone hath fulfilled it, which praise none can take from him, he alone hath deserved it, to him only it appertaineth. But whereas he is touched with care of the wounded man, hath compassion on him, bindeth up his wounds, bringeth him with him into an inn, provideth for him, and pertaineth unto us. The man which lieth half dead, wounded, beaten and spoiled, is Adam, yea and all of us. The thieves which spoiled us, wounded us, and left us half dead, as yet a little panting, are the devils. The horse and his sitter do here fall down, we are not able to help ourselves, and if we should be left lying so, we should die through great anguish and distress, our wounds would become festred, and our affliction miserable and exceeding great. This excellent parable is set before our eyes, lively painting forth unto us what we are, what is the strength of our reason and free will. If that wretched man had gone about to help himself, his case would have been made worse, he would have hurt himself, he would have opened his wounds with rubbing, and so would have fallen into greater calamity: Again if he had been left lying, it had been all one. So it cometh to pass when we are left to ourselves; our studies and endeavour surely are nothing, whomsoever we set upon the matter. Hitherto sundry ways and divers means have been invented, whereby we might come to heaven, and amend our life, this man found out this, another that, whereupon have increased innumerable sorts of orders, letters of indulgences pilgrimages to saints, which did always make the state of Christianity worse This is the world which is painted forth in this wounded man, he being wholly laden with sins, fainteth under so heavy a burthen, and is not able to help himself; but the Samaritan who hath fulfilled the law, and as perfectly sound and whole, cometh, and doth more, than either the priest or Levite, he bindeth up his wounds, poureth in oil and wine, setteth him

him upon his own beast, bringeth him with him unto an inn, maketh provision for him, and when he should depart, dillgently commendeth him to the host, and leaveth with him sufficient for expences, none of which either the priest or Levite did. By the priest the holy fathers are signified, which flourished before Moses, the Levite is a representation of the priesthood of the Old Testament. Now all these could do nothing by their works, but passed by like unto this priest and Levite; wherefore though I had all the good works of Noah, Abraham, yea, and all the faithful fathers, they would profit me nothing; the priest and Levite saw that miserable man lye wounded, but they could not help him any thing; they saw him lye half dead, but what was that to the purpose? They could not give him any remedy; the holy father saw men drowned and plunged in sins, even up to the ears, they also felt the sting and anguish of sin, but what could they do hereunto; they could make the case worse and not better; and those were the preachers of the law, which shew what the world is, namely, that it is full of sin, and lieth half dead, and cannot even any whit help itself with its strength, reason, and free will; But Christ is that true Samaritan, who is touched with as great care of that miserable man, as of himself: neither doth the Samaritan call him unto him, for he hath no merit, but injoyeth the meer grace and mercy of Christ, who bindeth up his wounds, and having great care of him, poureth in oil and wine, that is, the whole gospel; he poureth in oil when grace is preached, when it is said, behold, O miserable man this is thy incredulity, this is thy condemnation, thus art thou wounded and sick; but stay, I will shew thee a remedy for all this: Behold join thy self unto this Samaritan Christ the Saviour, he will best help and succour thee, and beside him nothing. The nature of oil, as ye know, is to make soft and molify, so the sweet and gentle preaching of the gospel maketh my heart soft and tender toward God and my neighbour, so that I dare bestow my body and life, for Christ and the gospel, if God and need so require; sharp wine signifieth the holy Cross of affliction, which forthwith followeth;

followeth; neither is there any cause that a Christian should look far about and seek the Cross, for it sooner hangeth over his head, than he is aware of, as St. Paul witnesseth, 2 Tim iii. 12. 'Yea, and all that will live 'godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.' This is the cognisance and badge of this King; he that is ashamed of this cognisance, pertaineth not unto him moreover, that Samaritan putteth this wounded man upon his own beast; this is our Lord Jesus Christ, who beareth us, we lye upon his shoulders, upon his neck and body; there is scarce a more amiable and comfortable history in the whole gospel, than where Christ compareth himself to a shepherd, which carrieth again the lost sheep upon his shoulders unto the flock; the inn is the state of Christianity in this world, wherein we must abide for a little time; the host is the ministers and preachers of the word of God, and of the gospel, whose charge is to have care of us; this therefore is the sum; the kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of mercy and grace, where is nothing else but always to be born and to bear; Christ beareth our defects and infirmity, he taketh our sins upon himself, and beareth our fall willingly, we daily lye upon his neck, neither is he wearied with that bearing of us. It is the duty of the preachers of this kingdom, to comfort consciences, to handle them gently, to feed them with the gospel, to bear the weak, to heal the sick; moreover they ought fitly to apply the word according to the need of every one; this indeed is the duty of a true bishop and preacher, not to proceed by violence and injury, as it is the custom of our bishops at this day, which vex torment, and cry out, go to, go to, he that will not willingly, shall be compelled to do it against his will; we must in no wise do so; but a bishop or preacher ought to behave himself as a healer of the sick, who dealeth very tenderly with them, uttereth very loving words unto them, talketh very gently with them, and bestoweth all his endeavours about them, the same must a bishop, or minister of any particular parish do, and think no otherwise, but that this bishopric or parish is as an hospital, wherein are such as are cumbred with divers and sundry kinds of diseases. If Christ

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be thus preached, then faith and love come together, which fulfil the commandment of love. Now as the knowledge of the law and the gospel and of the difference between them is very necessary, I will treat of them somewhat more at large.

Of the law and gospel. I have very often admonished your brotherly charity, that the whole scripture divideth it self into two parts: into the law, and the gospel. The law is that which teacheth what we must do, what the will of God requireth of us. The gospel teacheth where that is to be received, which the law commandeth. Even as if I seek to take physic, it is one art to tell what the disease is, and another to minister that which is good and wholsome to remedy it; so standeth the case here; the law revealeth the disease, the gospel ministreth the medicine, which is manifest even by the text whereof we have already treated; the lawyer cometh, and being very desirous of eternal life, asketh what he must do; the law declare this unto him, saying, 'Thou shalt 'love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all 'thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, 'and thy neighbour as thy self' He that readeth these words after a bare and slender sort only, as the lawyer did, understandeth them not; we must pierce into the law, and every one behold his face and heart therein; God must be beloved of me from the bottom of my heart: Again, I must love him with all my soul, that is, from the depth of my soul, so that I throughly feel in my self that I love him; for to love with the soul signifieth in the scripture such love as a young man beareth toward a maid, which he feeleth throughly in his mind; moreover, with all my strength, that is, with all my members, also with all my mind, that is, all my senses, cogitations and thoughts must be directed unto God: Now I find in my self that I do none of these; for if I must love God with all my heart, soul, strength and mind, it is requisite, that mine eyes shew no angry twinkling or motion, that my tongue speak not any word, that my feet, hands, ears, &c. shew no sign of wrath, that my whole body, even from the crown of the head, to the

soles

soles of the feet, and all things belonging thereunto, do walk in charity, be as it were ravished with love and pleasure toward God, and always serve and worship him; wherefore, who is he which by the pleasure and love of virtue is chaste and righteous? there cannot be one such found in the earth; for we always find ourselves readier to wrath, hatred envy, worldly pleasures, &c. than to meekness and other virtues, I find in me not only a spark, but even a fiery furnace of wicked lust; for there is no love in my heart, no not in all my members; wherefore herein the law, as it were in a glass, I see whatsoever is in me, to be damnable and cursed; for not one jot of the law must perish but all must be fulfilled, as Christ saith: 'For verily I say unto 'you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one title shall 'in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled,' Matt. v. 18. Now thou findest not this in thee. that thou doest with all thy soul and heart, with cheerfulness and pleasure, whatsoever the law exacteth and requireth of thee, hereupon thou art damned and under the dominion of satan.

The law therefore serveth us thus far, to teach us, that we are condemned; for by it we find all wicked desires in us, and yet not so much as a spark of them ought to be in us. Howbeit, our school-men not marking this, have taught, that if one do according to his ability, God doth give his grace unto him. They are blind guides; they grant themselves, that a man is carried with no pleasure or cheerfulness to that which is good, and yet do they also teach, if one worketh, although it be with grief, difficulty, and slothfulness, that it is well with him before God; but Christ hath taught otherwise in this place, that we should workthat which is good with pleasure and love, readiness and facility; whom therefore shall we rather believe, Christ, or the school-men? But I leave that to your judgment, Of such corrupt and evil understanding of the law, monasteries afterwards came, whereby entred into this opinion, that it was thought to be sufficient to salvation to live in a monastery, and to follow the orders thereof, although that were done even with grief of mind; so they

they taught; but Christ will have us to work with pleasure and cheerfulness, so that if any thing be done with burthen or grief of conscience, it is sin, remove thy self therefore quickly from such a work; wherefore thus it might be said unto them; behold, O man, thou miserable creature oughtest to be carried with a certain delight to the doing of the law of God, but thou comest with no pleasure or cheerfulness hereunto, now see that thou shew thy pleasure and love herein, otherwise thou shalt be the enemy of God, and the friend of satan; thus men leaving their own rashness, might come to the knowledge of themselves, and might then say; therefore, O God, am I condemned, and that not unjustly. Hereupon it followeth, that we are all under satan, as long as we feel in us this difficulty and hardness to do that which is good; wherefore if I should speak the truth, I should say thus; I find indeed, something that is good in the law of God, but it is my death, and if it could be, I would wish that it were not; so are all men affected in their heart, as St. Paul plainly teacheth, Romans vii. If we should remain in such condemnation, we must needs perish for ever.

There is therefore another part, that is, the gospel, which sheweth comfort and salvation, declaring where that is to be had, whereby the law is fulfilled; when therefore I know by the law, that I am a condemned men, then lye I half dead among thieves, satan hath spoiled my soul, and hath moreover in Adam taken away all faith, all righteousness, and hath left nothing but bodily life, which is also quickly extinguished. Then come Levites and priests, which teach this and that but can help nothing, and so pass by; but when the Samaritan cometh, he helpeth, that is, when Christ cometh he sheweth his mercy unto us, saying after this sort; behold thou oughtest indeed to love God with all thine heart, but thou doest it not, now believe only in me, and thou shalt enjoy my obedience as thine own, this only helpeth me; then he putteth me on his own beast, that is, on himself, and carrieth me into the inn, that is, into the church of the faithful, then he by and

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be poureth his grace into me, that is oil; that I may feel my self to be laid upon his shoulder, that at the last maketh me to be of good cheer, and quiet and well affected in conscience: afterward he poureth in wine also, which with its sharpness may abate and tame the force of old Adam: and yet am I not so wholly restored unto health, health is indeed poured in and begun, but not yet wholly finished; then Christ hath care of me, and by his grace poured into me, doth purify me, that from day to day I may become more chaste, meek, gentle, faithful, &c. until I wholly die, for then I shall be altogether made perfect; so when we shall come to God the Father, and be asked of him, whether we believed in God, whether we love him, &c. the Samaritan Christ our Lord, who hath laid us on his own beast, will come forth and say, Lo Father although they have not wholly fulfilled the law, yet have I fulfilled it, suffer thou that to turn to the profit of them that believe in me; so it is needful that all the saints altho' very holy, be lyed upon the back of Christ. If so be that the holiest of all, as the priests and Levites could not satisfy the law, how shall we go about with our feigned works, as with shaving, habit, &c. to fulfil the same? O wretched and miserable calamity. These things shall now suffice to have been spoken concerning this text; let us pray unto God, that he will give us his grace.

SERMON XXIX.

Concerning the exercise and increase of Faith.

John iv. 46. to the 54. *And there was a certain noble man whose son was sick at Capernaum, &c.*

AN excellent example of faith is set forth in this text, of what sort it is, of what nature and quality,

lity, namely, that it is not a resting or idle thing, but lively and void of idleness, which goeth not back, but proceedeth on, and still more and more increaseth, which if it be not done, it is no faith, but only a dead opinion of God in the heart; for a true and sincere faith, which the holy Ghost poureth into the heart, cannot be idle; which I say for this cause, that no man be therefore secure, altho' he hath obtained faith, neither that he stay there. It is nothing to begin unless we increase by continual going forward, and come to greater knowledge of God; for on the contrary side, it is the nature and quality of our adversary satan, not to be idle, as St. Peter saith, satan sleepeth not, but goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; if so be that the devil is neither idle, neither sleep cometh upon him, neither shall it be meet for a Christian to be idle or put his hands in his bosom, forasmuch, as he hath the devil his enemy, who is stronger than himself; for he is called the prince of the world, 'For we wrestle not against 'flesh and blood, but against principalities, against pow-'ers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, a-'gainst spiritual wickedness in high places,' Eph. vi. 12. This prince governeth the world furiously and fiercely rageth, and cannot suffer the prosperous success of a Christian; neither is it to his profit to be suffered of him, for an entry being made hereby, his kingdom is burst in two, and his net torn in pieces, out of which as much as he is able, he suffereth no Christian to escape, moreover when the fire of faith is kindled, and the flame fostered, and satan trieth and marketh that, by and by he practiseth deceit against it, for he knoweth how much hindrance his kingdom shall take thereby, wherefore as earnestly as he can, even with all his power, he defendeth his kingdom, and laboureth to keep all in obedience to him. Wherefore it is most certain, that when a Christian hath begun to believe, by and by temptation and persecution will assail him; which if it come not to pass, it is a sign that his faith is not yet sound, and that he hath not as yet truly received the gospel; for wicked Satan hath a very sharp sight, he by and by spieth

spieth out where is a true Christian, wherefore he applieth himself wholly unto this, that he may inforce him to fall, may besiege him, and assail him on every side: for he cannot suffer that any should revolt from his kingdom. It is perilous therefore for a man to believe, for the devil is ready that he may set upon him, and overthrow him, which sometimes chanceth even to very holy men, which understand the word of God well, when they stand upright, and think themselves safe, that privy wicked fiend cometh upon them by little and little, and wrestleth with him so long, till he overthrow them and cast them to the earth; set before thine eyes Moses and Aaron who were guides of the Jews, they had an excellent faith, when they brought the people out of Egypt, and all the people in faith passed through the red sea, death, the wide wilderness, and many other marvellous things, whereby they shewed their faith, but at the last they fell grievously, they fear that they shall perish with hunger. Is it not a thing most miserable, that by so great signs they shew their faith, they go into death and through death, wrestle with it, and overcome it, and yet while they think themselves surest, they fall and suffer themselves to be overcome of the belly, murmur against God, and are so grievously tempted, that they fall altogether; wherefore it is not certain and sure, if one begin, to believe, and doth not always more and more increase in faith. Yea, that godly man Moses, who had so great and strong a faith, did fall also when, as he should bring water out of the rock with a staff, he doubted and talked thus to the people, Come let us see whether we can bring water out of the rock. That good Moses which had shewed so many and so great signs, falleth into reason and carnal understanding, fearing lest the incredulity of the people would hinder so great a miracle and sign; but it had behoved him to cleave fast to the word of God, and to think it higher, greater, stronger, and mightier, than the unbelief of the people: that great man was tempted, he stumbled, and was overthrown. We have like examples in the new Testament, St. Peter was hardy, and firm in faith when he beheld Christ upon the water, he said

unto him with a strong faith, Lord suffer me to come unto thee committing himself to the water even as to the ship, he thought assuredly, that the water would bear him; then was there an excellent faith in St. Peter and great courage, which durst commit himself wholly unto death in the midst of the sea, reposing his hope freely and boldly in Christ; but when he thought himself most safe, a storm and tempest ariseth, he forgetteth the word, suffereth his faith to fail, and he himself also falleth, suffering satan to pluck faith out of his heart; faith truly is a subtle and delicate thing, a small thing maketh to stumble and fall; satan is always watchful, and circumspect, and doth by and by obtain his purpose, if we do not diligently watch. How earnestly did the common people follow Christ? they thought that he was a prophet, and did so cleave unto him, and so defend him, that the princes of the people were made astonished, neither durst they so much as lay hand on him; but when they apprehend him, proceed against him, fasten him to the cross, the people all forsake him, and come no more to him; A prophet is present, and no man any more assisteth him, but they rather cry out against him, crucify him, crucify him; and that which is most detestible of all, his own disciples revolt from him; what is become now both of their faith and holiness? So is it at this day in our time; at the first when the gospel began to shine, the preaching thereof was acceptable and pleasant, then many seemed willing to embrace it, but when monks and sacrificing priests, nuns, &c. began to be spoken against, and the mass to be confuted, all (a marvellous thing to be spoken) fell away as leaves off trees. Again when princes also were touched, the gospel suffered greater persecution, and did by little and little daily decrease. Moreover satan is not idle, whereupon he stirreth up heresies and schisms, for how many sects have we hitherto suffered? he sleepeth not, he will stir up greater mischiefs, also he never resteth, but looketh about, and trieth every way, that he may bring the matter to that pass, and prevail so far, that no sound doctrine may remain in the church, but that if all Germany be diligently viewed

viewed, a sermon may no where be found, wherein the word of God is truly preached, as it was before; he goeth about to extinguish and abolish all the doctrine of Christ now increasing, for he cannot bear it, it is not an easy thing to avoid so great an enemy, he lyeth in wait, and vieweth all places, and so diligently bestirreth himself that even the learned fall, and the elect stumble, as Moses, St. Peter with the rest of the apostles. We think ourselves safe, and live securely, no man considereth, no man hath a care of the word, we should pray and beseech God, that he would vouchsafe to preserve the gospel, and make his holy name to be spread and published more abroad; but no man is touched with care hereof, no man prayeth that it may have good success; wherefore it is to be feared, that at the last it will come to pass, that God will suffer satan and us to run together into one, then shall we be in a desperate case, for he will easily throw us to the ground, when we are come into so great misery by our own slothfulness and default; Satan moreover can so set forth the matter by seditious spirits that men shall think it to be just; as the Arians were persuaded, that their opinion was found but the Christian humbleth himself, taketh nothing rashly upon himself, but with an humble heart saith thus unto God; most gracious God, altho' I know that the cause which I favour is just, yet without thy help I am not able to main it, thou therefore help me, otherwise I shall be cast and overthrown; he is indeed certain of his cause even as St. Peter was on the water, who could not be surer, when the water did bear him; for he knew no let or hindrance, but when the wind was great, and the water troubled, he perceived what was wanting in him; which is throughly to be received into our mind, and considered of us; for altho' the certainty of our cause be confirmed, strengthened, and ratified with plain sentences of the scripture, yet it is by the might, council, and power of God, that we are defended, and satan our chief adversary and enemy repressed; which is therefore done, that God may stir us up to watch, and keep us in awe, that we may always be watchful, and cry unto him;

Lord help us, and increase our faith, for without thee we are able to do nothing. Our heart must be always so disposed, as though we began to day to believe, and always so affected, that we desire and labour to go more and more forward; for that is the nature, force, and quality of faith, that it always increaseth and waxeth stronger; satan as it is a little before mentioned, neither is idle nor resteth, if he be once overthrown, he riseth again, if he cannot enter in by the door, he endeavoureth to steal in at the backside, and if this be not permitted him, he breaketh in through the roof, or entereth in through a hollow place digged under the threshold, for he doth so earnestly follow his work, until he come in, he useth many deceits and practices, if he prevaileth not by one, he taketh in hand another, and doth that so long, until he hath obtained his purpose. Man is a weak and a miserable thing, as St. Paul saith, 2 Cor. iv. 7. 'We have this treasure in 'earthen vessels,' &c. I am more frail than a pot compared to the potter, and a pot is a very weak thing, inasmuch as it is easily broken, and whatsoever is in it, is spilt. Now satan when he knoweth how great a treasure faith is, kept in a frail pot (that I may so speak) he is in a great rage and fury, and saith thus unto us; I will touch thee, I will break thy pot, thou hast a great treasure, which I will spill; so God setteth the sillypot in the midst of his enemies, which should utterly perish, even in a moment if he did not defend it, for it may quickly be shaken and broken in pieces, yea if it be but bitten of a viper, it perisheth. And it is not hard for satan even in one moment to waste and destroy a whole country. Wherefore that vexeth him, that God dealeth with him so simply, setting a silly pot against him, when he notwithstanding is so great a prince, and the most mighty ruler of this world. Now it would grieve me, if I being strong and valiant, any man should set upon me with a reed, surely I being moved with anger would break the reed in pieces; for I had rather that he would set upon me with a spear, sword, and armed on all parts. It grieved stout Goliah, that David durst come unto him unarmed only with a staff; so it greatly grieveth the devil

devil that God will suppress him by flesh and blood; if some stout spirit should resist him, it would not grieve him so much, for that troubleth him above measure that a silly worm, a frail pot should come to despise him, an earthen vessel against a most mighty prince, God hath laid up this treasure, saith Paul, in a miserable and weak vessel; for man is a weak creature, by and by moved to wrath, to covetousness, to pride, &c. so that satan may easily shake and break the vessel; for if God would permit him, he would forthwith break it all to pieces. Now all this is done, saith Paul, that we may know that not by our own power, but by the power of God, we are preserved from all evils, and especially from the force and fury of satan, who goeth about like a roaring lion, desiring to bruise and break the weak vessels and frail pots; and that we may hereby also be stirred up to be watchful, and to lift up our eyes toward heaven, and pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to increase and defend our faith, and preserve the vessel by his strength. Thus have we an entrance unto our text, it remaineth that we now consider the same in order. The Evangelist saith thus: 'There was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.' It falleth out with many other men also, that they have their children sick; but that which he saith afterward is to be marked: 'When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would 'come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of 'death.' Here saith beginneth and trusteth in Christ. Now that he had faith the gospel declareth; for he heard of Christ how he healed the sick, thereupon his heart was set upon him, and he resorteth unto him, thinking thus: If he helpeth all men he will also help me, and will heal my son. He counteth Christ for such a man as is able to help men, and hopeth and promiseth to himself all goodness from him; and that indeed is a true Christian heart which cleaveth fast unto God. If that this ruler had stood in a place or way having two paths, doubting with himself, he had not gone unto Christ, but his heart would have been thus affected: He helpeth others indeed, but who can tell whether he will help me also? Howbeit he

doth not thus doubt of Christ, but riseth and maketh haste unto him. This is the beginning of faith; now ye shall see how Christ meeteth him on the other side, and answereth otherwise than he thought for, that his faith might be tried, and thus he saith unto him: 'Except 'yesee signs and wonders, ye will not believe,' Christ said also to St Peter, Mat. xiv. 31. 'Thou of little faith, 'wherefore didst thou doubt?' Peter undoubtedly had faith, and did believe in Christ, whereupon he committed himself to the water, but when he saw the wind he was afraid, and began to be drowned; so in this place, that good man heareth a good report of Christ, that he helpeth every man, which he believeth, and therefore resorteth unto him. But when he heareth that Christ denieth to come, he stumbleth, and his faith faileth, fearing that Christ would not come unto him. This is as it were an assault and sore blow, here his new begun faith begin-neth to be tempted. It was a hard saying, 'Except ye see 'signs and wonders, ye will not believe;' which saying doth so tempt him and bring him into doubt, that he almost falleth, satan standing at his back, saith unto him. Get thee home and look to thy business, for he will not help thee; notwithstanding the ruler did not by and by leave off, but prayed the Lord, 'Sir come down 'ere my child die.' Here his faith began to be in danger and to fail but God doth not forsake him, but lifteth him up again, and saith unto him, 'Go thy way; thy son 'liveth.' If the ruler had not had faith he would not have requested Christ to come to his son; What therefore doth he want? Even this; he believed if Christ came to his house, he could then help his son, if he did not come, he could not help him. Neither did his faith extend so far, as to believe that Christ even being absent could heal the sick; but it behoved that he should have a higher faith. Wherefore Christ lifteth him up, and setteth him in a higher state, and saith unto him, 'Go thy 'way; thy son liveth.' Here he first ascendeth from his former faith, whereby he believeth that Christ could heal being present, and cometh to a higher faith, so that now he believeth the word: for if he had not believed the word he would not have left Christ, neither would have

have departed from him, until he had come with him to his house. By having laid hold on the word, he cleaveth unto him by faith, for his son is at home, and Christ is with his father; wherefore the father receiveth this word in his heart, and thinketh with himself after this sort; My son is sick, but I shall find him whole; which faith was contrary both to reason and experience. Reason would have thought thus: When I came from my son he was sick, as I did leave him, so shall I find him But faith saith otherwise, it resteth only in the word, and trusteth wholly unto it, neither doubteth it that any thing will fall out otherwise than a word speaketh, 'Go thy way; thy son liveth.' This is a right and strong faith, when a man liveth sense, wisdom, reason, and trusteth wholly in the word of God; Christ saith, 'Thy 'son liveth;' and he saith with himself, without doubt it is true I shall so find it. So faith remaineth not idle, nor resteth, but increaseth amd goeth forward. Thus Christ dealeth with us also, he suffereth us to be tempted, that we may increase in faith; if in the end of our life when we must die, we shall have but a spark of such faith we shall be in a good case, as Christ saith unto his disciples, Mat. xvii. 20. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." A grain of mustard-seed is but a small thing, but he that hath faith agreeable to the smallness of this grain, shall be saved. Neither must we so much consider this, that our faith is little, but we must look unto this, we must have regard unto this, that the grain of mustard-seed do remain, and be not eaten up of the birds; that satan pluck not faith out of our hearts. We must not look how little the faith is, but we must regard and take heed that faith be not taken away. Peter had faith upon the sea and therefore was he carried by the water, that he should not be drowned; if he had so persevered in faith, he might well have walked an hundred miles upon the sea, but when he failed in faith, he began to be drowned. So Moses had a strong faith, but he fell from it. It consisteth not in the strength or slenderness of faith, that we do stand, but in persevering

and remaining faithful. It may be that he shall persevere in faith, which hath but a slender faith, and he that hath a strong faith shall fall and doubt. Moses and Peter had an excellent faith, so that Moses by faith did lead the people thro' the midst of the sea and death, and Peter without doubting went down out of the ship into the sea, but they fell from their faith, howbeit God raiseth them up quickly again. But the thief on the cross having once laid hold of faith, continued constant. Now God therefore suffereth it to be thus, that he may bring down rash arrogancy, that we do not gloriously extol ourselves, but always remain in fear and awe; for when temptation cometh upon us, we do forthwith fall into error, if God do not assist and strengthen us, of which thing we may see a very goodly similitude in a tree, which in the spring-time buddeth and openeth itself, so that it doth as it were become whit by reason of the blossoms. A shower falling upon it, many of the blossoms are shaken off, and the frost also doth much more consume them; afterward when the fruit beginneth to spring forth, some great wind blowing, much of it being newly come forth, falleth down, and when it waxeth ripe, the caterpillar cometh, which with other worms gnaweth and spoileth it so much, that scarce the twentieth part, yea scarce the hundredth part many times remaineth. The same cometh to pass with the hearers of the gospel, in the beginning thereof every one coveteth to be a true Christian, every one liketh of it very well, and the first fruits thereof are very pleasant; but when wind, a shower or temptation cometh, all fall away from it by companies; afterwards sects and seditions arise, which like unto worms and cankers gnaw and infect the fruits of the gospel, and so many false opinions spring up, that very few do persevere in the true profession of the gospel: we have here, thanks be given to almighty God, the word of God plentifully taught, we are delivered out of deep and great darkness, but we forgetting the word are made weak, we live having no care of the word for it is not savoury unto us but when hereafter false prophets shall break in with their corrupt opinion, and satan also shall violently

lently assail us, finding us idle, and the house swept and garnished, he will bring with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and the end shall be worse than the beginning, which things if they do so fall out, let us not therefore be quite discouraged, but let us rather instruct one another, that we may learn to cleave unto God, and pray unto him, and say, merciful God, thou hast given unto me to become a Christian, give unto me also that I may persevere, and become daily richer in faith. Altho' the whole world did resist, and every one conspired to destroy the gospel, yet will I be nothing moved. But by thy divine help will depend on the gospel; but to return again to the ruler ye have heard that his faith was very notable and excellent, he heareth the word, 'Thy 'son liveth,' he believeth it and goeth away giving honour to God, he receiveth the only word, he trusteth wholly unto it: hereupon, God dealeth so graciously with him that he restoreth health unto his son, raiseth him up, and strengtheneth him in faith, neither suffereth him to stick in doubt or infirmity, but establisheth him, and maketh him strong, and causeth him to go forward and increase: neither doth God delay until he cometh home, but declareth unto him being yet in his journey the health of his son, sending his servants to meet him, that they might bring him good news, and say, thy son liveth; for God cannot defer or delay, where there is a sincere heart, which trusteth in him alone, all other things being left, looking only unto the word of God, there God cannot hide himself, but revealeth himself, and cometh unto such a heart, and make his abode there, as the Lord saith, John xiv. Now what can be more joyful then for a man to give credit to the word of God, and to be plucked from it by no affliction or temptation, but to shut his eyes against every assault of Satan, to lay aside human sense, understanding, reason, and wisdom, and to say daily in his heart, God hath spoken it, he cannot lie. I say nothing is more joyful than such a faith; for whatsoever we ask of God with such a faith, we receive it more abundantly of him, than ever we desired it, and God is sooner present with us, than we had thought; hereupon the Evangelist useth

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so many words, even unprofitable, as it appeareth unto us, as these. "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him saying, thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend: they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth;" All which tend unto this that we should know, that if we believe in the Lord he will give us abundantly, whatsoever we shall pray unto him for. The conclusion the Evangelist maketh as followeth, 'and himself believed, and his whole house.' He so increased in faith, that he did not only ascend from a low state to an higher, but he brought others also unto faith; he had surely an effectual faith, which did not rest idle and slothful in the heart, but did break forth, so that whosoever were in his house were brought unto faith; for this is plainly the nature of faith this is the quality of it, to draw others into it, and burst forth, and apply it self even unto the work of love, as St. Paul witnesseth, Gal. v. That faith which worketh by love, is effectual, for it cannot keep silence or be idle, as David saith, Psal. cxvi. which place St. Paul applieth to the faithful, 2 Cor iv. 13. 'I believed 'and therefore have I spoken;' Faith can do no other, for it is enforced to speak, neither can it keep silence, inasmuch as he that is endued with it, endeavoureth to profit his neighbour; this ruler had faith for himself, but it doth not remain in him alone, but breaketh forth. For without all doubt he declared to his family, how he came unto Christ, and received comfort of him, which they also believed; so we also, when we believe, must open our mouth and confess the grace which God hath shewed unto us; which as the chief and most excellent work of faith, that one instruct another in the word; for Paul saith, Rom. x. 10. 'With the heart man believeth 'unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made 'unto salvation.' If we be ashamed of this word; it is a certain argument of a very light and uncertain faith. We see therefore that there is no difference with Christ

certain

between the strong and the weak in faith. for a little faith is faith also. He therefore came into the world that he might receive to himself, bear and sustain the weak. If he was so impatient as we are, he would by and by say unto us, get thee from me, I will none of thee, because thou believest not in me: but this is greatly to be commended, when one can handle the weak gently, and do not deal rigorously with them, and repel them by impatience; for although they be weak to day, the hour may come, when they shall receive the word more abundantly than we; thus we ought to instruct and teach one another, that we may depend on the word of God; for if we continue in sticking on the word, we shall be strong enough for the devil; for we glory of the word, altho' we are but weak. Unto Satan, who is able even in one hour to overthrow us all, all men should be even as a feather, which he would be able to remove away how and when he will, yea even with his breath, but if we believe, that feather is made more heavy unto him, than the hill Olympus; for a Christian beareth Christ in himself, and Christ is heavier than heaven and earth. Thus much may suffice concerning this text.

SERMON XXX.

Of Mercy to some and Judgment to others.

Matth. xviii 23. to the 35th. *Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, &c.*

CHRIST brought forth this parable unto that answer which he had made to St. Peter, unto whom he had before committed the keys of binding and loosing; for when St. Peter asked him how oft he should forgive his brother his offence, whether it were enough to forgive him seven times, and he answered, not seven times, but seventy times seven, he then added this similitude, by which he inferreth, that his heavenly Father will do likewise unto us, if we do not forgive our neighbour, even as the king did here unto the servant, which would not forgive his fellow servant a small debt, when as his lord had forgiven him so much. We have oftentimes

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taught that the kingdom of God wherein he reigneth by the Gospel, is nothing else but such a state or government, wherein is meer forgiveness of sins, so that where such a government is not, wherein sin is pardoned, neither is there the gospel nor kingdom; wherefore those two kingdoms are to be separated, one wherein sins are punished, and another wherein they are forgiven, or wherein the law is exacted, and wherein that which is due by the law, is remitted. In the kingdom of God, where he reigneth by the Gospel, there is no exacting of the law, neither any dealing by the law, but only remission and forgiveness, neither wrath or punishing, but brotherly service and well doing one to another; notwithstanding the civil law or magistrate is not taken away, for this parable speaketh not any thing of worldly goverment, but of the kingdom of God only: wherefore he that is yet governed only by the regimen of the world is yet far off from the kingdom of heaven, for worldly government pertaineth wholly to inferior things; As if a prince govern his people so, that he suffer injury to be done to none, punishing offenders he doth well, and is therefore commended; for in that government this sentence flourisheth: Pay that thou owest: which if thou donot, thou shalt be cast into prison; such governmentwe must have, howbeit we come not to heaven by it, neither is the world therefore saved, but this govornment is therefore necessary, that the world do not become worse, for it is only a defence and fortification against wickedness, which if it were not, one would devour another, neither could any man keep in safety his own life, wife, goods, children, &c. That therefore all things should not fall, come to ruin and perish, God hath appointed the sword of the magistrate, whereby wickedness may be partly repressed, peace and quietness among men maintained, and one may not do another injury, wherefore this is in any wise to be kept: but as I said, it is not ordained for them that are in the kingdom of grace, but therefore only, that men be not more deeply plunged in wickedness, and become worse. Wherefore no man that is only under the regimen of the world, ought to glory that he doth therefore well before God, before whom

whom all is yet unrighteous; for thou muſt come ſo far that thou do reſign that which is juſt before the world, and yield of thine own right. This the goſpel doth here require, which on either ſide ſetteth forth unto us only forgiveneſs. Firſt the lord forgiveth the ſervant all the debt, then he requireth of him, that he forgive his fellow ſervant his, and remit his offence: theſe things God requireth, and ſo muſt his kingdom be ordered, that no man be ſo wicked, neither ſuffereth himſelf ſo to be moved, that he cannot forgive his neighbour. And as it is a little before this text taught of the Goſpel, if he ſhould provoke thee to anger even ſeventy times ſeven, that is as often as he can offend againſt thee, thou muſt yield of thine own right, and cheerfully forgive him all things: why ſo? becauſe Chriſt did the ſame; for he ſet up and erected ſuch a kingdom, as wherein is only grace, which muſt at no time ceaſe, ſo that if thou repent all things will be wholly forgiven thee, as often as thou ſhalt offend, forasmuch as he hath ordained the goſpel, that it might preach no puniſhment, but only grace and forgiveneſs of ſins. This kingdom ſtanding, thou mayeſt always riſe again, how deeply ſoever thou falleſt, and ſo often as thou falleſt, ſo as thou repent; for altho' thou falleſt, yet this goſpel and mercy ſeat always continueth. As ſoon therefore as thou haſt riſen again and returned, thou haſt grace reſtored; howbeit he requireth this of thee, that thou alſo forgive thy neighbour all things, which he hath committed againſt thee, otherwiſe thou ſhalt not be in this kingdom of grace, neither ſhall become partaker of that which the goſpel preacheth, that thy ſins may be forgiven thee; this briefly is the ſum and meaning of this text.

Moreover we muſt not here omit to declare who they are that receive the goſpel, and unto whom it is acceptable; for ſurely that kingdom and government wherein God reigneth and ruleth by the goſpel, is moſt excellent and gentle, forasmuch as in it meer forgiveneſs of ſins is preached, howbeit it pierceth not into the heart of every one; neither is it conſidered or eſteemed of all; for thou mayeſt find many light and inconſtant men

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who abuse the gospel and lead their life dissolutely and loosly, doing what they list, who think that they should be rebuked of none, seeing that the gospel teacheth nothing but forgiveness of sins. The gospel is not preached to these who do so vilely esteem a precious treasure and deal lightly with it; wherefore neither do they pertain to this kingdom but to worldly government, that they may be stopped from doing whatsoever they like and list; to whom then is it preached? to them that throughly feel such misery, as this servant did here. Wherefore consider what happeneth unto him, the lord taketh pity of his misery and forgiveth him more than he durst desire; but before this is done, the text saith, the lord first took account of his servants, and when he began to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents, and because he had nothing to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, his wife and children and all that he had, and the debt to be payed: which truly were no pleasant words, but even exceedingseverity and terriblejudgment; then is brought into so great perplexity and distress, that he falleth down on the ground and asketh mercy, and promiseth more than he hath or is able to pay, saying, lord refrain thine anger toward me, and I will pay theeall.

Here is set forth unto us, who they are unto whom the gospel is acceptable; for so cometh it to pass between God and us: when God will take an account of us, he sendeth forth the preaching of his law, whereby we learn to know what we ought to do: as when God saith to the conscience, thou shalt worship no other God, but shalt acknowledge me alone for God, shalt love me with all thine heart, and repose thy trust in me only; this is the book of accounts wherein is written what we owe, which he taking into his hands, readeth before us and saith, lo, this thou oughtest to have done, thou oughtest to fear love, and worship me alone, thou oughtest to trust in me alone, and from me to promise to thyself all good things: howbeit thou dost otherwise, thou art my adversary, thou believest not in me, but reposest thy trust in other things, and in fine thou seest here, that thou dost not observe so much as the least

least point of the law. When the conscience hath heard these things, and the law hath touched one well, he seeth then what he ought to do, and what he hath not done, and findeth that he hath not kept so much as a letter of the law and is compelled to confess, that he hath not performed that obedience and duty which God justly requireth of him; what doth the Lord now? when the conscience is thus touched, and feeleth itself condemned, and is distressed with exceeding great misery, he saith sell him and whatsoever he hath, and let him pay the debt. This is the judgment which forthwith followeth, when the law hath revealed sin and said, This thou must do, that thou oughtest to have done, thou hast done nothing thereof; for to sin is required punishment, that man may be compelled to pray; for God hath not so made his law, that he doth not punish them that transgress it. It is not sweet and pleasant, but bringeth bitter and horrible pain with it, it delivereth us to satan, it casteth us down to hell, and leaveth us rapped in temptation until we have payed the utmost farthing: this St. Paul hath notably well declared, Rom. iv. 15. 'The law worketh 'wrath:' that is, when it revealeth unto us, that we have done unjustly, it seemeth nothing before us but wrath and indignation; for when the conscience seeth that it hath committed evil, it feeleth that it hath deserved eternal death, after which followeth punishment, whereupon it is compelled to despair.

This is that that the lord commanded this servant together with all his substance to be sold, for as much as he is not able to pay, but what doth the servant say? the foolish fellow thinketh yet, that he shall pay the debt, he falleth down and prayeth that he will have patience with him. This is the wound and cross of all consciences that when sin bitteth them so, that they feel in how evil case they are before God, there is no rest in them, they but run hither and thither, seeking about, that they may be delivered from sins, and rashly take upon them as yet to do so great things, as wherewith they shall pay God, as we have hitherto been instructed, whereupon came so many pilgrimages, collegiate houses, monasteries, masses and other trifles; we pined ourselves with fasting, we scourged ourselves with whips, we were

made monks and nuns, for that we went about to lead such a life, and to do such and so many works, as whereunto God might have respect, and thereby he pacified, thinking so to appease and make quiet our consciences, so we committed the same things that this foolish fellow did. Such a heart as is touched with the law, and throughly feeleth its own misery and calamity is humbled truly and indeed, whereupon it falleth down before the Lord and craveth mercy, howbeit it is yet defiled with this voice, that it striveth to help itself, which thing cannot be taken away from nature, when as the conscience feeleth such misery, it dareth presume to promise more than all the angels in heaven are able to perform: then itis an easy matter to persuade it to apply itself to do whatsoever can be required of it; for it findethitself always in such a case, that it hopeth that it is able by works to satisfy for sins; consider those things which have been hitherto of long time done in the world, then shalt thou find these things to be so; For thus was it preached, give somewhat to the building of a church, get thee to be admitted into a holy monastery, institute masses, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee. And when consciences were urged in confession, they would not stick to say, whatsoever was enjoinedus; we have admitted nothing of it, yea, we have given more than we were commanded: miserable men rejoiced that by this means they might provide for themselves, and therefore they mind and afflicted themselves, that they might be unburthened of their sins, yet did it prevail them nothing; for the conscience remained in a doubt as before. that it knew not how it stood before God: but if it were secure and quiet, it fell into that which is worse, to think that God hath respect unto works; neither can reason do any other but depend on works; the Lord therefore is touched with affection and mercy toward that misery wherewith the servant so entangled and snared with sins, is holden, and taking pity upon him, doth forgive and dismis him. Here is now set forth unto us, what is the special office and quality of the gospel, and how God dealeth with us; when thou art so drowned in sins, andwearieſt thyself; that thou

mayst

mayst deliver thyself from them, the gospel cometh to thee, and saith, do not so, dear brother, it prevaileth nothing, although thou afflict and torment thyself even till thou be mad, thy works do not profit, but the mercy of God shall deliver thee, who is touched with thy misery; for he seeth thee wrapped in calamity, wearying thyself, that thou mayest deliver thyself out of the mire, and yet art not able, he, I say, hath regard unto this, that thou art not able to pay, whereupon he forgiveth thee all, and that of his meer mercy; for he doth not forgive thee the debt, either for thy works or merits, but for that he taketh pity upon thy cry, complaint and mourning, and thy falling down before his knees, that is, God hath respect to an humbled heart, as the prophet saith, Psal. li. 17. 'The sacrifices of God 'are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, 'O God thou wilt not despise.' Such a heart, he saith, as is broken and humbled, which is not able to help itself, but craveth the help of God, and rejoiceth in it, such a heart is an accceptable sacrifice to God, and he that hath it, is in the right way to heaven. Now God having shewed his mercy unto him, and taken pity on his misery, ceaseth to follow his right, and abrogate it, and saith no more, Sell whatsoever thou hast and pay the debt, although he might go forward and say, thou must pay for this, my law requireth, which I will not have abrogated for thy sake, yet will he not deal with him by the law, but changeth the law into grace and favour, taketh pity on him, and dismisseth him, with his wife, children and all his substance, and doth also forgive him the debt. This is thatwhich God suffereth to be preached by the gospel, unto him that believeth is remitted not only the fault, but also the punishment, and that of meer mercy, not for any works sake; for he that preacheth, that by works, the fault and the punishment may be put away, hath even then denied the gospel, forasmuch as these two cannot agree together, that God hath mercy on thee, and yet that thou dost merit something; for if it be grace, it is no merit, but if it be merit then shall it not be grace, but debt; for if thou pay the debt, he

sheweth thee no mercy, but if he sheweth thee mercy, thou dost not make payment; wherefore we must needs acknowlege his mercy towards us, we must receive of him, and believe in him, which the gospel here requireth. After that this servant is this humbled with the knowledge of his sin, the word is exceeding comfortable unto him, wherein the Lord pronounceth him free, and forgiveth him both the fault and the punishment; whereby is also declared, that it toucheth not sluggish hearts, that feel no sin, neither those that are carried with rashness, but only such afflicted consciences as are pressed with the heavy burthen of their sins, which do greatly desire to be delivered from them, on them God hath mercy and forgiveth them all; wherefore it behoved this servant to receive the word, for unless he had received it, forgiveness had profited nothing, nay there had been no forgiveness at all. It is not therefore enough, that God suffereth remission of sins, and a golden year full of grace tobe preached untous, but it is necessary that we receive and believe it in heart; if thou believe thou art free from sins: this is the first part of a Christian life, which both this place and divers others in the gospel do teach us, which consisteth properly in faith, which alone hath to do before God; whereby also is shewed that the gospel cannot be received but of a troubled and miserable conscience. Hereupon now may be inferred that they are plain delusions, whatsoever things are any otherwise taught concerning our works and free-will, viz. that they put away sins, and obtain grace; for the divine majesty alone, beholding our misery, hath pity upon us; for the text sheweth manifestly, that God pardoneth and forgiveth them, that have nothing, and concludeth that we have nothing left wherewith we may pay God; howsoever therefore thou hast free-will in temporal matters, yet thou heareſt here that it is nothing before God; wherefore if thou desirest to be delivered from thy sins, thou must cease to trust in any of thy works, must plainly despair concerning them, fly unto Christ, pray unto God for grace, and finally receive the gospel by faith. Now followeth the other part, wherein the fellow-servant also is dealt with: this

servant

rvant nowhath enough, he saveth his body, goods, wife, ildren, &c. and hath his lord favourable unto him, herefore he should be surely very foolish, if he should ow depart, and do what he is able for the reconciliation his Lord, for his Lord might worthily say that he is ocked of him. He hath need therefore of no work, ut that he receive such grace and favour as is offer- d him, so may be of good cheer, giving thanks to is Lord, and dealing so with others as his Lord hath ealt with him. After the same sort it is with us, for hen we believe, we have God favourable and merci- ul unto us, neither do we need any thing more, but ow it were time that we should forthwith die; not- withstanding if we must as yet live still in the earth, ur life ought to be ordered so, that we seek not to btain the favour of God by works. For he that doth his doth mock and dishonour God, as it hath been itherto taught, that God is to be solicited by good vorks, prayers, fastings, and such like, until we ob- ain his grace and favour. We have obtained grace ot by works, but by mercy, now if thou must live, hou must have what to do, and wherewith to occupy hyself, and it is meet that all this be referred to thy neighbour. The servant went out, as Christsaith, and ound his fellow servant, whom he taketh by the throat nd dealeth rigorously with him, and will be wholly aid of him, shewing him no mercy or favour at all: I ave said elsewhere, that Christians must burst forth by vorks, and by their deeds before men witness that they ave a sincere faith. God needeth no works, but faith ufficeth him, howbeit he therefore requireth them to e done of thee, that by them thou mayest shew thy aith, both before thyself and also before the whole vorld, for he knoweth thy faith very well, but thou hyself and men do not yet throughly see it. Thou herefore must direct such works so, that they may pro- it thy neighbour. Now whereas this servant should hus have done, what doth he? even the same that we lo, who seem unto ourselves to believe, and partly ave faith and are glad that we have heard the gospel, whereof we can dispute and talk many things, but no

man goeth about to expreſs it in his life. We have brought the matter ſo far, that the doctrine and trifles of Satan are ſomewhat abated and laid aſide, that we do now ſee and know, what is juſt and what unjuſt: that we muſt have to do with God only by faith, and by works with our neighbour. But we cannot bring it to this paſs, that love may begin, and do that to another which God hath done unto us, as we ourſelves complain, that many of us are become worſe than they were before. As therefore this ſervant refuſed to remit his neighbour the debt, and dealt extreamly with him; ſo alſo we, ſaying, it is not meet that I ſhould give that that is mine to another, neglecting mine own right. If this man hath provoked me to anger, it is his duty to pacify me, and to labour by intreaty to put away mine anger. Truly thus the world teacheth and doth, for it affirmeth it to be juſt and right. Neither will any prince or magiſtrate inforce thee to give that which is thine unto another, but will ſuffer thee to do what pleaſeth thee with thine own goods. The magiſtrate indeed reſtraineth thee from doing what thou liſt with the good of another, but he conſtraineth thee not to give thine own ſubſtance to another, for that is againſt the law of nations, which even reaſon pronouncing it, giveth to every one that which is his own; wherefore he doth not unequally or unjuſtly which uſeth his own things at his will, and taketh not away wrongfully the goods of another. But what doth the goſpel ſay? if God alſo had held his own right and ſaid, I do well in that I puniſh offenders, and take that which is mine own, who ſhall let me? What I pray you ſhould become of us all? We ſhould be thruſt down to Satan. Wherefore he hath left his right toward thee, he will have thee do the ſame toward other, and therefore thou abrogating thine own right think thus with thyſelf: If God hath forgiven me ten thouſand talents, why ſhould not I forgive my neighbour an hundred pence? God might have exacted his own right, nevertheleſs he doth not ſo, but becometh a favourable Lord unto thee, taketh pity upon thee, and forgiveth thee: why therefore ſhouldeſt not thou do likewiſe to thy neigbour? Wherefore if thou

hou wilt have to do in his kingdom, thou muſt do as he doth, but if thou hadſt rather remain in the kingdom of the world, thou ſhalt never enter into his kingdom. Hereunto pertaineth that ſentence, which Chriſt in the laſt day ſhall pronounce upon the unbelievers: 'I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: 'I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink,' Mat. xxv. 42. But if thou contend here, and ſay, that God will not have reſpect unto works, neither will ſave any becauſe of them, I ſay he will have them done frankly and freely, not that we may merit any thing thereby, but that we may do them to the profit of our neighbours, and witneſs our ſincere faith by them; for what haſt thou that thou mayeſt give him, and whereby thou mayeſt deſerve that he ſhould pardon whatſoever thou haſt committed againſt him? or what doth he get thereby? nothing truly, but that thou giveſt unto him praiſe and thanks. And this is the other part of a Chriſtian life, the name whereof is Love. They therefore that ſhew not their faith by the works of love are ſuch ſervants, as will have themſelves forgiven, when as they notwithſtanding donot forgive their neighbour, neither yield of their own right, with whom it ſhall likewiſe fall out as it did with this ſervant. For when the other ſervants (that is, the miniſters and preachers of the goſpel) ſhall ſee it, that God hath forgiven them all, and yet they will not forgive any, they are troubled, that they are compelled to ſee ſuch things, and it grieveth them very ſore, that men do ſo indiſcreetly apply themſelves to the goſpel, and not rightly receive it. What do they then? they can do no other, but come to their Lord, and complain unto him of ſuch things, and ſay, Lord, thus it is: thou forgaveſt them both the fault and the puniſhment, yea pardoneſt them all things, and yet we cannot bring them ſo far, as to deal ſo with others as thou haſt dealt with them. This is the complaint: the Lord therefore will cauſe them to come before himin the laſt judgment, and will lay thoſe things againſt them ſaying, when thou waſt afflicted with hunger, thirſt, miſery, &c. I did help thee; when thou didſt lie drowned in ſins, I having

mercy upon thee, did forgive thee. Hast thou done the same to thy neighbour? then he shall pronounce this sentence on him: thou wicked one, I was touched with mercy toward thee, yea I yielded of mine own right, but thou wouldest not take pity on others, nor forgive them their offence, wherefore thou shalt now pay the debt. Here is no grace and mercy, but most grievous wrath and eternal condemnation, then no prayers help, wherefore he is compelled to hold his peace, and is thrown headlong into pain, until he pay the uttermost farthing. This is that which St. Peter hath spoken of them, 2 Pet. ii. 21. which after they have heard the gospel, notwithstanding go back, it had been better for them, if they had never acknowledged the way of righteousness, than after they have acknowledged it, to turn from the holy commandment given unto them. Why had it been better? because while they go back, it becometh worse with them than it was before they heard the gospel, as Christ saith of the unclean spirit, Mat. xii. which taketh unto himself seven other spirits worse than himself, with which he cometh, and dwelleth in that man, out of whom he before had gone, and so the end of that man is worse than the beginning. After the same manner cometh it to pass with us, and shall hereafter also be usual: so also hath it fallen out with Rome. In the time of the martyrs she was in her best flower, but afterward she fell, and abomination was there erected, that Antichrist might reign there, yea she became such a one, that worse she cannot be. The grace of God, which is revealed and preached by the gospel was hidden, that men might not attain unto it: wherefore it could not be but a great and grievous scourge and plague should follow. So we shall also have that great vengeance to come upon us, for that we do not believe nor obey the gospel which we have and know. For as often as God would send an horrible scourge and plague, he hath first set up a great light; as when he would send the Jews out of their own country into captivity in Babylon, he first raised up the godly King Josiah, who should again restore the law, that the people might amend their life,

but

but when they did again revolt, God punished them according to their desert. So when he minded to destroy the Egyptians, he made a light to be set up, and preached unto them by Moses and Aaron. Moreover when he would drown all the world by the flood, he sent the Patriarch Noah; but when men did not mend but became worse and worse, such a sore and grievous plague did follow. Likewise the five cities Sodom and Gomorrah, together with the rest were destroyed, for that they would not hear Lot, who feared God; wherefore a sharp vengeance shall light upon them also, which hear the gospel, but do not receive it; even as the servant here in the gospel, is delivered to the tormentors till he should pay all the debt; which is as much in effect as that he is compelled to suffer punishment for his fault, and is never saved; for unto sin is required death, and when he dieth, he dieth always, neither is there any help or deliverance remaining; wherefore let us receive these things for our own admonition: as for them that will not hear, being hardened and indurate, let them beware of the evil that hangeth over them. This is a very comfortable text, and sweet to troubled consciences, inasmuch, as it containeth in it meer forgiveness of sins. Again, it setteth forth terrible judgment to the unmerciful and hard hearted, especially seeing that this servant is not an heathen, but had heard the gospel, in that he had faith; inasmuch as the Lord took pity on him, and forgave him his offences, without doubt, he was a Christian; wherefore this is not the punishment of Gentiles, nor of the common sort that hear not the gospel, but of them that with their ears hear the gospel, and with their tongue talk of it, but will not express it in their life: we have here the sum of this text. Whereas the schoolmen dispute here, whether sin cometh again, which was before remitted, I let it pass, for they are ignorant what remission of sins is; they think it is a thing that cleaveth to the heart, and lieth quietly, when as notwithstanding it is plainly the kingdom of Christ, which endureth for ever without ceasing; for as the sun nevertheless shineth, although I shut mine eyes; so this mercy seat or forgiveness of sin standeth always, altho' I fall.

And as I again behold the sun when I open mine eyes, so I again have forgiveness of sins, if I rise again, and return unto Christ; wherefore, let no man bring forgiveness into such a strait, as these mad men dream of.

SERMON XXXI.

Teaching, that we must cleave wholly to Christ, and look to obtain all good Things from him.

Matth. ix. 18 to the 26. *While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, &c.*

DEarly beloved, ye know that the gospel is nothing else, but a treasure of the only person, whose name is Christ. And altho' there be extant many books and sundry treatises concerning divers men, as well of the Gentiles as Christians, yea, and of the mother of God, St Peter, the angels, and of many other saints beside, yet be they not gospels, but that only is the sincere gospel, which setteth forth Christ unto us, and what good we must hope for from him; sometime in the gospel there is mention made of St. John the Baptist, Mary, and the apostles, howbeit, this is not properly the gospel, but therefore it is written of them, that it might be more perfectly declared, from whence Christ should come, and what is his office; so Luke describeth the history of John the Baptist, even from the beginning, what was done both in his conception and in his nativity, he writeth also of the virgin Mary; all which things were committed to writing, not because of their persons, but because of Christ's person only; in the epistle of St. Paul, there is nothing committed to memory of the saints but all things sound plainly of Christ; for God hath so ordained, that all must depend on that one man Christ. must hope in him, must repose their trust in him, if they desire to be saved, for he alone is set forth of God to be a reconciliation for us, as Paul saith, Rom. iii. Hitherto one hath cleaved to this saint, another to that

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one chose to himself St. Mary, another St. Barbary, and divers sects and sorts of religion did flourish; but Christ was in no price, for his name only remained: we had many intercessors, all which being neglected, we ought to have cleaved only to Christ. Hereupon St. Paul saith, that the gospel was promised of God by the prophets concerning his Son; he reduceth and bringeth it into such a streight, that in the gospel nothing is of any importance which concerneth not Jesus Christ; he that knoweth this, let him give thanks to God, that he knoweth where he may seek for consolation and help, and in whom he may repose his trust; Christ in this day's gospel is set forth unto us, that he is conversant in the midst of the people, and draweth all the world unto himself with his gentleness and sweet doctrine, that they may cleave unto him in their heart, that they may commit themselves to his goodness, and hope that they shall obtain of him both spiritual and temporal good things. Neither doth he receive any thing of them, upon whom he bestoweth benefits, nay, he obtaineth nothing of them but ignominy and scorning, as is declared in this text. A benefit proceedeth from him, for which he receiveth mock and reproach; now the gospel is preached and offered to the whole world, that we may learn to know this man well, and how we must be made Christians, and not how we must be made good; other treatises beside the gospel teach those things, whereby men may be made good, as the writings of the philosophers and the rulers of the civil law; the lives also of the saints have especial respect unto this, that men may imitate them; it belongeth not to the gospel to make good men, but to make Christian men; for it is far more excellent to be a Christian, than an honest and good man. A Christian can say nothing of his own goodness or righteousness, for he findeth in himself nothing either good or righteous, but he must fly to the righteousness which is in another, and which cometh unto him from another. Hereupon Christ is set forth unto as a continual fountain, which always overfloweth with meer goodness and grace, for which he receiveth nothing of us, but that the godly do acknowledge so great goodness and grace,

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do give him thanks for the same, do praise and love him; others in the mean time mocking him, such reward he receiveth of them: Wherefore one is not therefore called a Christian, for that he worketh much, for there is another thing, which is cause thereof, namely, that he receiveth and draweth from Christ; if one receiveth nothing from Christ, he is no more a Christian, so that the name of a Christian cometh only by receiving, and not by giving or doing; if thou think that because of thy works and deeds thou art a Christian, thou hast even then lost the name of Christ. Good works indeed are to be done, counsel thereunto is to be given and received, but no man is therefore called a Christian, neither is any therefore a Christian; wherefore if any will more inwardly weigh this name, in this respect only a Christian is to be acknowledged, inasmuch as he receiveth of Christ alone, even as one is called white of the whiteness that is in him, black of the blackness, great of his stature; so a Christian is called of Christ, whom he hath in himself, and of whom he receiveth that which is good. Now if one be named a Christian of Christ, he taketh not that name of his own works; whereupon it plainly also followeth, that no man is made a Christian by works; which if it be true, as it is true and certain, it shall follow that orders and sects do nothing pertain to the name of Christ, neither do make a Christian; wherefore they which preach or teach in the church and ordain precepts, works, and decrees, are deceivers, who altho' they pretend a Christian name, yet profit they nothing, for under the colour of that name they endeavour to burthen and oppress us with commandments and works; of works, giving thy self to fasting and prayers, thou mayst be called abstemious and temperate, but by no means a Christian; for although thou didst lay all thy works together, yea, and joinedst the works of all others to thine, yet neither so hast thou Christ, neither art thou therefore called a Christian; Christ is a more excellent thing, than either the law or man's tradition; he is the Son of God, who is ready to give only, not to receive; when I am such a one that I do receive of him, I have him also, whom if I have, I am by good right called a Christian;

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moreover, the gospel preacheth Christ also to be the greatest and most highly exalted person in the world, not that he doth terrify men, but that he poureth forth all earthly and heavenly good things, so that all men must trust in him, must have their hope reposed in him. and always receive only of him; if any sin terrify me in my conscience; and the preachers of the law endeavour to help me with their works, they shall prevail nothing with me; for then Christ alone can help and none beside him, yea, others make the case worse, whether it be St. Peter or Paul, or the blessed virgin Mary her self the mother of God; for Christ only performeth all things, who in his word declareth, that if I believe, my sin is forgiven me freely, without either work or merit, by pure grace through faith in Christ: which word then I shall receive, I receive also comfort, that my sins are forgiven me as well before God as before men, and I therefore give thanks to God through Christ, which giveth the holy Ghost and his grace unto me, that sin may not hurt me, neither here, nor in the last judgment; if I fear death, and would not die willingly, in this Christ I shall find comfort and remedy, that I shall not greatly fear death; if because of the wrath of God I am afraid, he is my Mediator; and to be brief, he that hath not this Christ, the wrath of God always remaineth over him, and in that state he standeth; wherefore he that desireth to have a glad conscience, which is not afraid of sin, death, hell, and the wrath of God, must take heed, that he repose his trust in this Mediator Christ; for he is a fountain abounding with grace, which giveth both temporal and eternal life; endeavour thou to think and feel him even in thy heart to be such a one, then shalt thou obtain all things, for he aboundeth and overfloweth, neither can he but give, flow, and abound, if that thou canst believe; then also shalt thou be a right Christian, howbeit by receiving only of Christ, and not by giving; it is a very rich and precious word, which St. Paul praiseth so greatly, neither can he ever praise it sufficiently, whereby God so gently offereth his Son, that he may pour forth his grace upon all which do not refuse to receive it. Hereupon it moreover

over followeth; if so be that a Christian doth good works, whereby he sheweth love to his neighbour, he is not therefore made a Christian or righteous, but he must needs be a Christian and righteous before; he doth good works indeed, but they do not make him a Christian; the tree bringeth forth and giveth fruit, and not the fruit the tree; so none is made a Christian by works but by Christ. Hereof now ye may understand, what kind of people Christians are, namely that they are a company which cleave unto Christ, and are of one spirit and gift with him. Hereupon, it is that all Christians are alike, neither hath one more of Christ than another; St. Peter is not better than the thief on the cross; Mary the mother of God doth not excel Mary Magdalene the sinful woman; there is indeed a difference in outward things and doings, so the work of the holy virgin Mary was greater, than the work of Mary Magdalene; St. Peter had a greater work than the thief, if thou consider the works, but we are not therefore Christians; the holy virgin Mary is not a Christian, because of her great work, for that she did bear Christ, so unspeakable a treasure in her womb, as Christ himself said to the woman, which cried unto him from among the people, Luke xi. 27. 'Blessed is the womb that bare 'thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked: But he said, 'Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God 'and keep it.' Inwhich place thou seest, that he preferreth the faithful even above his mother; for Christians do therefore bear their name, because they believe in Christ; a virgin and a mother are two notable names, howbeit they are nothing, before compared to the true name of the faithful; wherefore we are all alike in Christ through faith, altho' St. Peter have a stronger faith than I, yet mine is as well faith in Christ as his; for the same Christ is offered of God the Father unto all companies and people, whom he that hath obtained, hath him whole, whether he be strong or weak. The woman mentioned in our text, which was troubled so many years with her disease, doth receive and apprehend Christ as well as the virgin Mary his mother; wherefore there is one Christian spirit, one excelleth

leth with another in the nobleness of birth, St. Peter is inforced to call me his brother, and I again dare be bold to call him my brother. Yea Christ himself is touched with care of us, and counteth us for his brethren, as he said after his resurrection to Mary Magdalene, John xx. 17. 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my 'God and your God.' And St. Paul calleth Christ the first born among many brethren; whereof also he writeth excellently in the first epistle to the Corinthians, viii. 9. where treating of false brethren, he speaketh thus, "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idols temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols: and thro' thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." Here thou seest, if a Christian be offended, or evil be done unto him, the same is done unto Christ. This therefore is the sum of the whole gospel, that we may learn so to know Christ, that the name only do not remain, but that we may know that all that we have, we have it from him; if we be Christians, we have all things; then God is our father, and we are Lords of all, both heavenly and earthly things, which is gotten of us by no work, be it never so great. Thou seest now how far they are from the name of Christ, which are under the kingdom of the pope. They that will preach the gospel must preach nothing else, beside the only person, which is Christ, not Mary; so far must they be from preaching the pope, or any work although precious, they must preach and offer Christ only unto us, and none beside him: when now he is preached unto thee as a judge (as he shall come in the last day) and how that good works are to be done of thee, for which thou mayest be rewarded of him, and thou shalt so receive it, surely without all doubt he shall be unto thee a judge and not a Saviour. And if he be set forth unto thee as he was wont to be painted; that his mother shew-eth him her paps, that is, properly to preach Satan and

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not Christ, who giveth only, and receiveth not. This is certain, when thou shalt have received of him, then good works do flow forth of their own accord, being not compelled, as is set forth in this day's gospel; wherein moreover is declared that Christ preached the gospel to the people; now it is not a common work to preach. For it is a great benefit unto us that he is become our master and instructor, that he teacheth us by what means we may come to the knowledge of him, this is a part of his great goodness and grace; for as long as he was here in the earth, he ceased not to teach, that we might altogether receive him for the Messias and Saviour; and by his works also did help and relieve every one, when the case so required. Thou findest no man in the gospel to whom help was denied, or which at any time asked any thing of the Lord, which was not given him; for how many soever went unto him that were blind, deaf, lame, sick of the palsy, had the dropsy, he received all, and helped them all, according to their desire, and healed them of all kinds of diseases, as Luke saith, chap. vi. 19. 'And the whole multitude sought 'to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and 'healed them all.' So doth he also to this woman. The woman heareth him preaching, and perceiveth him to be a bountiful and gracious man, which sheweth himself gentle to the whole world, whereupon she hath an affection both to love him, and to cleave unto him; for she maketh account, forasmuch as he putteth away none from him, that he would not deny her his goodness, wherefore leaving all the apostles, she casteth both her heart and confidence upon Christ alone, and thinketh thus with herself; If I may but touch but the hem of his garment, I shall be whole. She thought no other in her heart, but certainly he will help me, if so be that I shall touch his garment with mine hand. yet hath she not so good a courage, that she dare come before his face she judged herself more unworthy than that she might either talk with him, or look upon him; for she knew that she had deserved nothing, and that she had bestowed no good thing upon the Lord; hereupon it is that she so behaveth herself, she cometh behind his back, she falleth down at his

his feet, and touched only the hem of his garment. In fine, here is nothing but meer baſhfulneſs and want of merit; here is no preparation, here is no work, and yet the miſerable woman promiſeth herſelf much goodneſs from the Lord namely, that he would heal her. She had been diſeaſed with an iſſue of blood twelve whole years, what ſhould ſhe merit thereby? how could ſhe therefore be worthy of any thing? Nevertheleſs being unworthy, and having merited nothing, ſhe notwithſtanding looketh for help of Chriſt, feeling herſelf to have great need thereof And this is a true preparation, both to the grace and goodneſs of Chriſt, when I feel myſelf to ſtand in need thereof, and then doth it very well fall out, when theſe two come together, the rich and the poor, Chriſt and the ſinner. But it is no ſmall matter for men to be perſuaded, that they are poor, and ſtand in need of grace; for that cometh to paſs very hardly, Satan alſo doth not ſuffer it, but always draweth men back to works, that they may not come ſo far as to think that they have need either of the grace or mercy of Chriſt. The text affirmeth that the woman was diſeaſed with an iſſue of blood twelve whole years, and had ſpent all her ſubſtance upon phyſicians, and that the more medicines ſhe took, the worſe always ſhe was. Luke and Mark doth not a little amplify it, whereby they both ſignify that the more works are preached, ſo much the worſe it is with us, and that there cometh nothing unto us thereby, but a continual multiplying of our evil. Our conſcience cannot be quieted with works, for altho' ſome ſin be driven out of the conſcience, forthwith there is another, yea the remedy and work oftentimes do make ſin in us, where there is no ſin, until ſuch time as we come to Chriſt, even as it was with this woman, which had been ſick ſo long, neither had ſhe ever been helped, if ſhe had not come to Chriſt, of whom ſhe obtained health without any works, giving him nothing, but receiveth only of him, and ſuffereth to be given unto her. Now here is alſo declared how the word of God is daily to be handled, and without ceaſing to be urged, for there are as yet always found ſuch men as have very troubled and afflicted conſciences

sciences; for this woman is a type and figure of all men, which are diseased with an issue, that is, which feel their sin, the issue whereof doth always run, neither can it be stayed, for flesh and blood doth no otherwise, it is carried away with its own lust and desire. Now if that feeling of sin be great, those wretches come forth and indeavour to help themselves, then one taketh this work in hand, and another that, and yet prevail they nothing; from hence so many orders, so many monasteries have sprung, hereupon so many and so great works have been invented, that they are almost without number. What was the cause of all these? Surely even thy sinful conscience; for we have thought to save our souls by these, and to be delivered wholly from all sins. But Christ was not there present, for we would give and receive. Wherefore our case became always worse, as it fell out also with this woman, who had tried the help of all physicians, and could not find whereby she might be helped; so we also believed all physicians, for whatsoever every one brought, that we by and by received. And was it any marvel? for we desired to be healed and to have a glad conscience. The physicians are the preachers of the law: Now if any desired to be delivered from sins, what did they unto him? They gave him, whereby he became only weaker and feebler, which surely we have seen and felt to our great evil, namely, how they would have men to be justified by works, and by them to be delivered from sins. But it profiteth nothing for we were alway made more weak against sin and death, so that there is never found in the earth a more desperate sort of people, than sacrificing priests, monks and vestal virgins, and they whatsoever they be that trust in works; if there did but a little bile rise upon them, by and by they must run to the apothecary, then is such trying of medicines, such running and haste, as though they had now breathed their last. Neither is any so afraid of the last judgment as this people, which then they very well shew, when they deal so with works, that they rest only upon them, neither do persevere constant in any work, and the more works they do, so much worse is their case, so much

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more are they cast down in mind, and become more desperate, so that it falleth out with them, as with this woman. It is a very goodly similitude, which may most fitly be applied to us; for we do not only bestow temporal good things, but our body also by fasting chastising, and bearing other hard and intolerable burdens, so that some have thereby become mad, and destitute of all strength, yea and at the last lost their life. And I myself have been such a one, and have, without doubt, more resorted to medicines than many others, I could not attain so far as to leave the Pope's law. It seemed a hard and sore matter to me to eat flesh on Friday. O good God, how hard a thing was it to me, before I durst attempt to do that? Wherefore if any will be delivered from such things, and contemn the traditions of the Pope, truly he must have a strong foundation of faith, which if he shall not have, let him look about him again and again before he attempt it: for if faith be wanting, it will fall out with us, as with this woman, who had spent all her substance upon physicians, mending nothing, but rather waxing worse and worse: In like manner all our works, labours and endeavours shall be lost, all our obedience, with all orders or religions, and whatsoever we have bestowed therein, shall be in vain. Howbeit if we have faith, we shall at last see the decrees of the Pope and Popish bishops to be nothing, because of which, we have trembled and were troubled, all which did help us so much, as the physicians did that goodwoman, which had bestowed all her substance and riches, yea and her body also, that she might be healed. How many kind of medicines and syrups thinkest thou did that woman use? how weak, feeble, and sick was she oftentimes made with them? yea, if she might have been healed, it may seem she would have taken any medicine, howbeit it profited her nothing, she was afflicted with her disease the space of twelve years. How therefore is this miserable woman at the last helped? When she did light upon a man whose name is Christ, and put her hope and trust in him, she was healed. But who led her to that man? without doubt, not the physicians; for if our preachers should

preach Christ, the merchandize of the Pope, together with his decrees, would be nothing set by; but rather she heard it of some that was also restored to health, who told her without doubt, that there was a certain man, whom his parents had named Jesus, which is a gentle and good man, which helpeth every one, and sendeth away none from him whom he helpeth not, and therefore is without doubt sent of God, that he may help all; which the woman having heard, she leaveth the physicians, and maketh haste unto Christ. So also at this day it falleth out; not Christ, but works only are preached do this or that, nevertheless it is spread among the people what Christ is, what we must look for from him, and that he alone must do all things without our works or merits. This report being heard we follow him, and lay up these words in the depth of our heart, we leave the physicians, nothing regarding the preachers of the law and works, or their commandments and traditions, but run with all desire of heart to this man, which is Christ, saying to the Pope, If I must receive only, of Christ, how unwisely have I dealt, that I have turned so much unto thee; farewel therefore, O Pope, farewel ye beloved bishops, I need no more your medicine, works and merits, precepts and laws, ye have grieved me long enough with them, I have gotten one, which bestoweth upon me freely, whatsoever I paid full dear for unto you before; he giveth that unto me without works and merits, for which I was feign before to bestow my body, strength and health, and yet could not obtain it. Fare ye well, I mind to come no more to you hereafter. Christians therefore are made, not by the decrees of the Pope, not by works, not by the ordinances of men, but by the grace and goodness of Christ. Wherefore if thou hast a disquieted and troubled mind and conscience, so that thou art afraid of sin, dreadest death, or hast some defect otherwise, get thee to that man, and confess what thou wantest, call upon him, then surely he will help thee; 'Pour out your heart 'before him,' as the 62d Psalm saith, and say thus unto him, Behold here is an empty vessel, which greatly needeth to be filled; I beseech thee, O my Lord, vouchsafe

vouchſafe to fill it, I am weak in faith, I pray thee to ſtrengthen me, I am cold in charity, do thou make me hot, and fervant, that my love may extend unto my neighbour, I have no firm faith, neither can I ſometime truſt in God. O Lord help me, and encreaſe my faith and confidence; in thee have I repoſed the treaſure of all good things, I am poor, thou art rich, and therefore didſt thou come, that thou mighteſt have mercy on the poor: I am a ſinner, thou art righteous, yea I have abundance of ſins, but in thee is all fulneſs and grace. When thou ſhalt once have learned this, the Pope's ordinances ſhall not ſnare thee, by which thou getteſt nothing, but conſumeſt all that thou haſt, like as this woman did. Then wilt thou ſay, I will chuſe to myſelf him, of whom I may receive, unto whom I need not give any thing? The other Evangeliſts write concerning this woman, that after ſhe was healed, Chriſt perceived virtue to have gone out of him, and turned him about in the preſs, and aſked who had touched him, and that his diſciples made anſwer; that the multitude did throng and thruſt him but the Lord would not be content with that anſwer, but ſaid ſome one hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me, I know that ſome one hath received ſomething from me: All which the Lord therefore did, that the faith of the woman might be thankful unto him, which he would therefore have made manifeſt before all the people, for that nothing is more acceptable unto him, than that we believe and truſt in him, and alſo that the Lord might by this miracle confirm the faith of the ruler. Wherefore Mark ſaith, that when the woman underſtood that the Lord knew of her ſhe feared and trembled, and came and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth, how it fell out with her: whereupon the Lord doth deliver her and ſaith, 'Go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.' Were not theſe loving words? What great joy did the woman take here, when as Chriſt had dealt ſo bountifully with her? This joy and peace all they obtain, which repoſe their whole hope and truſt in Chriſt Jeſus. Where this joy ſhall be, forthwith works muſt

needs follow, which may shew forth this joy; as also the faith of this woman must needs come to light. For as soon as she had received of the Lord, she confessed before all the people, neither was she ashamed to declare, that she had received something of him, for which notwithstanding she had given nothing. Now, God requireth of us these works, and this giving of thanks, viz. that we confess and declare, before all men such good things, grace and benefits, that others also may be brought unto him, and suffer a benefit to be bestowed upon them, as it was here done. Wherefore a Christian life enforceth me to do good unto others also even as God through Christ hath done good unto me, but thereby am I not made a Christian, as the woman here is not healed by her confession, for she was healed before any work and confession, but after she had recovered her health, she confesseth Christ, and praiseth him even to the advantage and converting of others. We also, as we are Christians, do so live, that one helpeth and pleasureth another in what thing soever he is at any time able. And as this woman was healed before all works, so we must be made Christians before we do any work. As the gospel is set before our eyes in this woman; so is it also set forth in the daughter of this ruler. This chief ruler of the synagogue, whom Mark calleth Jarius, had a strong faith and confidence, that Christ would raise up his daughter; for unless he had been of that mind concerning Christ, he had not come unto him, neither had desired such a thing of him which exceeded the power and strength of nature. Wherefore by this prayer he shewed his faith, which faith being perceived, the Lord could not but grant his desire, wherefore rising forthwith, he went with him, and in his going this history of the woman came to pass, which had been diseased of an issue of blood twelve years, as we have now heard. When therefore the Lord was entered into the ruler's house, he saw the minstrils and the multitude making noise, which were there according to the law of Moses, and did sound the trumpet and pipes, as in our country they ring the bells to gather the people together.

together. But he commanded the multitude to go forth, saying, 'The child is not dead, but sleepeth.' And they laught him to scorn and mocked him. Which giveth us to understand, that when it is preached, that Christ is he which saveth, that our works prevail nothing, then the world cannot contain itself, but that it scorneth and mocketh, for it cannot be persuaded, that Christ doth help and succour, even as this people without all doubt said after this sort: Behold what an excellent master and a goodly physician he is, what could he have holpen, which knoweth not yet, what it is to sleep, and what to be dead? This title must needs remain to the gospel in the world, that the preaching thereof is counted foolish and contemptible; for satan cannot abide that honour should be given to this gospel before the world, for it bringeth but small advantage to his kingdom, which forasmuch as he perceiveth full well, he practiseth all crafts and wiles, that he may either altogether hinder it, or at the least make it to prevail little with them that are his, whose hearts he hath wholly blinded and possessed, that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should not shine unto them, as St. Paul saith, 2 Cor. iv. Neither yet can it be, that this preaching of Christ should not be fruitful, forasmuch as it is not uttered in vain: for altho' if he received but of a few, that doth not greatly skill. When therefore Satan perceiveth any thing to be taken from him, and that that preaching is ordained plainly against his kingdom, he doth without delay pursue it, contemn it, and assail it on every side, that even now he is fierce and rageth in the whole world. For the gospel of Christ overthroweth whatsoever the world and Satan delight in, and whatsoever to the world seemeth most holy and goodly. For the world imagineth to itself such a God as hath regard to our good works, and will be pleased with the erecting of masses and vigils for them that are departed, with rosaries, as they call them, habit, shaving, and whatsoever other trifles are used in the papacy. Now if there come any which bringeth the gospel, and envieth against these vain toys of the Pope, and saith that they are nothing worth, but are meer delu-

sions, inasmuch as they are repugnant to Christ and the scripture, he is counted a most wicked fellow, and therefore must be punished, he is reproached as an heretic and a seducer of the people: so that they burst forth into great words and say, wilt thou govern all the whole world? dost thou think thyself the wisest man that is? and were our forefathers foolish and without all understanding? many holy men have done these works and have preached of them, and wilt thou come and turn them all into nothing? thou shalt not do it. Then rage and fury beginneth, yea persecution, slaying and murdering and the devil will seem to have a just cause howsoever the matter goeth. Thus much shall suffice at this time concerning this text. Now ye must take especial heed, that out of the gospels ye learn throughly how all things consist in the only person, whose name is Christ, and lay up this in the depth of your heart, that a Christian hath his name of Christ. For I know how much it availeth both in temptation and in adversity to hold that fast. Let us now by prayer call for the grace of God, that at the last we may with most earnest zeal and hearty affection embrace true Christianity. *Amen.*

SERMON XXXII.

Of the Works which Christ hath wrought for us.

John xx 24. to the 29. *But Thomas one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.* &c.

I Know nothing more certain concerning St. Thomas, than that which this gospel mentioneth of him. Other things which are written of him in the book of legends, are most impudent lies. And altho' they were partly true, yet they have no authority, neither make us any thing the better. Wherefore we will leave them untouched, and speak something of this gospel, which those legends. The former part of this gospel fell out about

thoſe legends. The former part of this goſpel fell out about the even-tide of the paſſover, when two had returned from Emmaus, and ſhewed unto the other diſciples, that the Lord was riſen again. The latter part fell out the eighth day after the paſſover. It is marvellous how comfortable this goſpel is, ſhewing unto you, the fruits of faith, namely peace and joy, as St. Paul ſaith, Rom. v. 1. 'Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have 'peace with God, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.' But now I will treat in few words, what this is that the Lord ſheweth to his diſciples, his hands and his feet, whereby is declared unto us, what advantage we have by Chriſt, whereunto he profiteth us, and what we muſt look for of him. It is ingrafted in the hearts of all men as it were by nature, to have a certain will to be honeſt and godly, and every one thinketh how he may come to ſalvation, whereby it hath come to paſs, that one hath invented this thing, another that, being verily perſuaded, that thereby he ſhould make God favourable unto him, and obtain heaven, but none ſuch at any time hath ſtood in the right way, foraſmuch as all have had this drift, that they might procure God's favour by deeds and good works. Notable doctors alſo and holy fathers have written and taught many things, how we might obtain unto godlineſs. About this they have miſerably troubled themſelves, but as we ſee, and to our notable loſs have felt, they have done little. Wherefore it is exceeding neceſſary, that ſome ſound knowledge be had thereof, whereby we muſt endeavour to true godlineſs, foraſmuch as it is a thing of no ſmall importance. For he that is deceived here, loſeth the ſum and chief point of all Chriſtianity; hereof therefore we muſt now ſpeak ſomewhat. True and ſound righteouſneſs conſiſteth not in our own works, but in the works of another. Take an example hereof: One building temples, another for religion ſake goeth to St. James, to Aquiſgrane, to Rome, to the holy ſepulchre, the third pineth himſelf with faſtings, prayeth, weareth a cowle, goeth bare-foot, or worketh ſome other ſuch work whatſoever it be, theſe are our own works, God hath not commanded them, but men and hypocrites,

justifiers of themselves have invented them, and have thought that they are precious good works, and greatly esteemed of God, sweetly persuading themselves, that they are by them delivered from sins, and that God is pacified towards them. But these works chosen of their own proper will, are nothing worth at all, neither can stand, forasmuch as they proceed not of faith, yea they are sins, as St. Paul saith, Rom. xiv. 23. 'For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.' These our works therefore are defiled and unclean in the sight of God, yea he doth abhor and loath them Wherefore if we will have to do with God, we must not trust to our own works, but to the works of another. But which are those works of another, that are allowed of God? Truly the works of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God the Father sent down from heaven, that by his death and passion he might satisfy for our sins. This satisfaction fell out upon this occasion: We were subject to great danger, grievous tyrants and power over us, which day and night without ceasing did vex us. The law which God gave unto man, did urge us, and required many things of us, which we were not able to perform, and therefore it condemned us. Sin also did lie upon us as a heavy burden which the law did oftentimes make greater and greater. Death went about to devour us, inasmuch as it is the wages of sin, Satan also endeavoured to throw us down headlong to hell, inasmuch as he would punish us for our sins committed; allthings are full of trembling and anguish. God taking pity upon this so great calamity, sent his only begotten Son, and that of his meer grace and goodness, without our desert, that he might deliver us out of so great tyranny, which he mightily did after this sort: He satisfied the law, and fulfilled it perfectly. For he loved God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength, he loved his neighbour also as himself, in these the whole law and the prophets do consist. Now whatsoever Christ did, it consisted in these two; he loved God, inasmuch as he obeyed his will, he took upon him the nature of man, and performed in all obedience those things that were enjoined him of the Father, as St. Paul saith,

faith, Phil. ii. 8 'He humbled himself, and became o-'bedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' Secondly, he loved his neighbour; for all the works which he did in the earth, tended unto this end, that he might thereby profit his neighbour, and therefore he so loved his neighbour, that he even died for him, as he saith himself to his disciples, John xv. 13. 'Greater love hath no 'man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' St. Paul doth more set forth this saying, for his enemies when he writeth thus, Rom. v. 8. 'But God commend-'eth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sin-'ners, Christ died for us.' Forasmuch then as Christ hath so fulfilled the law, it could not accuse him, neither was sin of any force with him: he set upon it, and did prevail over it, and swallowed it up, it was inforced to be extinguished of him, no otherwise than a spark of fire in the most wide sea: for in him was nothing but meer righteousness. Death also came, and went about to devour him, it devoured him indeed, but it could not digest him, it was inforced to yield him up again, yea, and this devouring was an utter disadvantage to death, for the case being quite altered Christ devoured death it self; for it had set upon him, against whom it had no right, forasmuch, as not a whit of sin did appear in him; where sin is not, there death hath nothing to do, at St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. xv. 'The sting of death is sin,' with this it killeth, otherwise it should be dull, and have no strength. Satan also made a trial of his strength in him, but in vain. and to his own grief, for he laid hands on him, with whom he had nothing to do; the wretch was overcome in this conflict, and went away with shame, as Christ saith, John xiv. 30. 'The prince of this world cometh, and 'hath nothing in me'. Hell also did open his mouth, and would have devoured Christ, but on the contrary it was devoured of him, and so in this conflict the law, sin, death, satan, and hell were vanquished, over all which he triumphed and gloried with great pomp, as St. Paul saith, Col. ii.

All these things were not only done for our advantage, but also if we believe in Christ, they are given unto us; for whatsoever he hath it serveth for

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us, yea, he himself is ours, as St. Paul saith, Rom. viii. 31. 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him 'up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give 'us all things?' So that I may boldly glory of all victory, which he obtaineth over the law, sin, death, the devil, and may challenge to my self all his works, even as if they were my own and I my self had done them, so that I believe in Christ; otherwise his works shall profit nothing at all, if they were not given unto me: these are the works of another which do commend us before God and save us, our own works shall do nothing, we are weaker than that we can even resist the least sin; of so great consequence is it, that we are able to encounter with death, satan and hell, wherefore when the law shall come, and accuse thee, that thou doest not observe it, send it unto Christ, and say, There is that man which hath fulfilled the law, to him I cleave, he hath fulfilled it for me, and hath given his fulfilling unto me, when it heareth these things, it will be quiet; If sin come, and would have thee by the throat, send it unto Christ, and say, As much as thou mayst do against him, so much right shalt thou have against me; for I am in him, and he is in me; if death creep upon thee, and attempt to devour thee, say unto it, Good mistress death, dost thou know this man? come and bite out his tooth, hast thou forgotten how little thy biting prevailed with him once? go to if it be a pleasure unto thee, encounter with him again; thou hadst persuaded thy self, that thou shouldst have prevailed somewhat against him, when he did hang between two thieves, and died an ignominious death, which was counted cursed both before God and the world; but what didst thou gain thereby? Thou didst bite indeed, but it turned worst to thy self; I pertain to this man, I am his, and he is mine, and where he abideth, there also will I abide. Thou couldst hurt him nothing, wherefore also let me alone. After the same sort, if the devil, if hell, come violently upon thee, and trouble thee send them unto Christ, and thou shalt easily make them to cease.

And thus you see what Christ is unto us, namely such

such a man as is given unto us of God, that he might exting uiih sins, vanquish death, destroy hell, overcome the devil, and all these for our advantage. If he had not done this, nor given unto us these things, we had been for ever under the curse of the law, under sin, under death, under the devil, and under hell, God delivered us from these by Christ. Wherefore St. Paul saith out of the prophet Hosea, 1 Cor. xv. 54. "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ." Hereof we may easily understand what kind of works those be, which do make us entire and righteous before God; surely they are the works of another, and not our own works chosen of our selves, wherefore the whole papacy falleth here, with all the most precious and holy works thereof, which hath this drift only, that miserable, wretched, and blinded men may be persuaded, that they obtain heaven by their merits, and their own works. Hereupon have sprung so many orders, that they cannot almost be numbered, of which one striveth to be holier than another, according as they exercised harder, greater, and weightier works; but this their miserable labour, anguish, prayer, fastings, chastising of the body, and such like, were vain works, and of no value at all; neither had they so much power, that they were able to take away so much as even the least sin, which they call venial; they were altogether unmindful of this saying, Isai. xxix. which the Lord repeateth, Mat. xv. 8. "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their hearts is far from me But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Hereupon now thou mayest gather with thyself, that all holy men although they be exceeding holy, yet do obtain salvation, not by their own holiness, merits, or works; and not so much as Mary her self the mother of God was made righteous and holy in respect of her virginity, or in that she was the mother of God, but salvation hath come unto all by Jesus Christ, as by the

works

works of another; wherefore this is diligently to be noted, that our felicity doth not consist in our own works, but in the works of another, namely, of Christ Jesus our Saviour, which we obtain through faith only in him. This also the history of the gospel seemeth to signify, when as the Lord sheweth to his disciples, but especially, to Thomas, his hands and feet; by whichdeed he declareth, that it was necessary that those hands and feet should do these things, and that no other works, that is, their own, and not the works of another, do pertain unto salvation; for in the scripture, by hands and feet, works and conversation are signified; these hands and feet Christ doth as yet oftentimes shew unto us; and say, behold, I am that only man, whose works and conversation are of force with God, thou shalt labour in vain with thine own works, mine own righteousness maketh nothing hereunto, it hath another end. If thou be righteous, it is profitable to thee among men, here in earth thou hast the glory and praise thereof, as St. Paul saith, Rom. iv. But before God this thy righteousness is of no estimation, thou must set in place thereof another, namely, mine, this God my Father doth allow; for I have delivered thee from sins, death, the devil, hell, and from all evil, thou shouldst never have escaped out of these by thine own power, but hadst lain as yet most deeply drowned in them; I have appeased the wrath of God, and of an angry judge, have made him a gentle, merciful and gracious Father: believe this and it goeth well with thee, thou art then safe, intire, and righteous; beware that thou presume not to deal before God with thine own works, but if thou wilt do any thing with him, creep into me put on me, and thou shalt obtain of my Father whatsoever thou desirest and asketh, as he himself saith unto his disciples, John xvi. 23. 'Verily verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever 'ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.' Wherefore as from the beginning sin, which was anothers, hath been derived unto us from Adam, for neither I, nor thou, have eat of the apple; so also by the righteousness of another we must be restored unto righteousness and integrity. This other is Christ Jesus, by whose

whose righteousness and works we are all saved, as I have now sufficiently declared. This St. Paul hath very well comprehended even in one sentence, where 1 Cor. i. 30. he saith thus, "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." And Rom. iv. 25. he saith. 'Jesus Christ was delivered for our offences, and 'was raised again for our justification.' In these two little sentences are briefly comprised, and joined together, whatsoever things we must look for from Christ. Howbeit, all these things are injoined by faith, for he that is without faith, to him they are impossible to be comprehended, yea, they are counted foolishness to reason and to the world, as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. i. 23. 'We 'preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, 'and unto the Greeks, foolishness,' that is, when Christ is preached, that he is our righteousness, that salvation cometh unto us by him, and that by him we are made the children of everlasting life, without our own works and righteousness, then those holy men, and justifiers of themselves are offended, no otherwise than the Jews. Moreover to the prudent and wise men in this world, it seemeth foolishness, and a certain ridiculous thing, that a man being fastned to the cross and put to death, doth perform these things, Whatsoever therefore is counted righteous, holy, wise and prudent in the eyes of the world, it is offended and stumbleth at Christ: but St. Paul saith moreover: 'But unto them which are called, 'both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, 'and the wisdom of God.' He saith also, Rom. i. 16. "The Gospel of Christ is the Power of God unto salvation, as every one that believeth, to the Jews first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith.' Wherefore the Lord saith, very well to the disciples of John, 'Blessed is he that shall 'not be offended in me.' So thou seest now plainly, that this faith which we have in Christ, cometh by the preaching of the gospel, as Paul affirmeth, Rom. x. 17. 'Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.'

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Here, here I say doth all the force consist, by the word of God, not by the word of man. The word of God doth these things, not when we publish indulgences, or preach of works, as hitherto, alas, it hath been done, to our exceeding loss, as well in the good things of the body, as of the soul: We made no account of goods which we bestowed plentifully, unless we had afflicted our body with fastings, chastisement, pilgrimages, and such like trifles. Indeed these things might have been borne with, if they had not with a false confidence in such doing, so miserably and lamentably led us away, and seduced us from a true faith and confidence in God through Christ: but praise be unto God, that we have for the most part perceived such delusions; for the world was so full of this misery and preaching, that it did almost overflow, which surely came by the vengeance and wrath of God, for that we contemned his word, and followed mens fables, yea, our own wits and opinions Then we were in so great blindness, that we did almost without difference believe every man, what kind of work soever he brought and gloriously set forth. From these deceitful follies our consciences are now delivered and set free, but no man doth so much as once give thanks to God therefore. If we shall be contemptuously negligent, a more grievous misery shall light upon us than this was: neither should that come unto us undeservedly, forasmuch as we do greatly procure these evils against ourselves by our unthankfulness. When as before we gave with so great abundance and plenty, that by our liberality they were made almost Lords of the world, how hardly six or seven poor men are maintained in a city, yea, now the minister of a parish church hath not sufficient wherewith to live. Howbeit do not impute this perverse kind of living to the gospel, as our adversaries now impudently do. It is not meet, that thou suffer thy poor neighbour by thee to want: Yea, rather the whole gospel doth especially urge this, that thou have a care of thy neighbour, and that thou be serviceable toward him, that thou help him both with thy council and substance, even as God hath holpen and instructed thee.

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Such a one, without doubt, he that is indued with true faith sheweth himself, for he bursteth forth, and behaveth himself so toward others, as he hath tried God towards himself, and as he desireth to be done to himself, if he were pressed with poverty, anguish, and necessity; God needeth not our good works; our prayers, fasting, and building of temples, founding of masses, do displease him, he requireth not our sacrifices, but rather as Isaiah saith, hateth and abhorreth them. He is content with this one thing, that we acknowledge him before our God, trust in him, give him thanks, as he saith, Psal. l. 7. "Hear, O my people, and I will speak: O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of buils or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high. And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." But God sendeth us downward with our works to our neighbours, to the miserable, afflicted, and them that be void of comfort. It is our parts to help them, to comfort them, to teach and instruct them; and whatsoever benefit we shall bestow upon them, that we shall bestow upon God, and his Christ, as he shall say in the last day, 'Whatsoever ye 'have done unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye 'have done unto me.' Thus ye now have heard, that we, are justified and made righteous by the works of another namely, by the works of Christ, which we enjoy only by faith: the same faith charity doth naturally accompany, whereby we do so to our neighbour, as we do acknowledge that God hath done unto us; Hereof ye have elsewhere heard more; we will now make an end and call for the grace of God.

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SERMON XXXIII.

Reason not capable of the Gospel.

Matth. xi. 25 to the 30. *At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, &c.*

THis text toucheth as it were, the very pith and marrow of the gospel, other places of scripture wherein the miracles and doings of Christ are rehearsed. have not so much comfort as those in which those sermons of Christ to the people are contained, wherein he doth so lovingly teach us, and allure us to himself. I am not so certain of the favour which I see shewed to others in working miracles, as I have the plain words before mine eyes: it is a far greater comfort also unto me, to hear such loving admonitions and allurements, than the preaching of miracles, altho' they also confirm my faith, and are examples, that as he hath holden them, so also he will help me. This gospel treateth of the knowledge of God the Father, and of Christ his Son, shewing also whereof such knowledge doth consist. Now that the meaning thereof may be well known it is requisite to understand aright these two words; wise men, children or babes, but lest when we hear it, we say this pertaineth nothing to us, it is spoken to others, as the Jews said to the prophets which referred all things to the Gentiles, the words going before do sufficiently shew, unto whom or of whom these words are spoken; for before he speaketh of them that contemn the gospel, not vouchsafing to embrace it, whose duty notwithstanding especially was to embrace it inasmuch as they would seem alone to be them that were occupied in the word of God. and were to be counted for the people of God, of such he saith thus, "Whereunto shall I liken this generation? it is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented," which the Lord applieth to himself, and unto John the Baptist, as if he would say, we have preached unto you the gospel, John with a certain severity and austerity,

austerity, but I with very great clemency and gentleness, and yet ye will not receive it, ye shall at the last feel, without doubt, to your great evil, what it is to despise the word of God. It is very true, howsoever thou preachest to the people, whether thou be fair spoken or severe, gentle or ungentle, they will always seem to have some cause or other to complain of hee. These the Lord calleth here wise, and men of understanding, to these the gospel is hid; he meaneth not here those wise men which are truly wise in divine matters, for it is a great commendation if one be worthy to be called wise and prudent; true wisdom is nothing else but the knowledge of God, viz. when I know what we must think of God, and do understand his will: but prudence signifieth ability and knowledge to judge of worldly things, what is right or wrong, which St. Paul often joineth together especially in his epistle to the Ephesians, chap. i. and in his Epistle to the Colosians, chap. i. Of such wisdom Christ speaketh not here, but of worldly wisdom, which puffeth up men, and excludeth the true wisdom of God. We are all of this disposition by nature, often to rise against the wisdom of God. That is called good, by the instinct of human wisdom, which bringeth pleasure, honour and profit, but those things that are contrary to those, as affliction, dishonour, loss, these are called evil: for man's nature can seek nothing else at all, but those things that are his own, that which displeaseth him, he counteth the worst of all things, although it be the best; wherefore as I have said, the Lord speaketh here of those wise and prudent men, with which their own wisdom strive against the wisdom of God; worldly wisdom seemeth to itself to be so great, that it is not content to rule only these wordly and temporal things, but taketh also upon itself to have the oversight of heavenly things, it always searcheth out and imagineth some new things, even in spiritual and divine matters: So man's own wisdom hath invented shaven crowns and cowles, and almost all that wherein the papacy consisteth, every one hath chosen his proper work to himself, this man hath invented this,

another hath invented that, and if this be not abolished, and doth not greatly please, by and by they find out some other thing, as alas! we have seen, and do as yet see, neither is there any measure in these trifles, whereupon it cometh, that we can hardly away with the word of God and the truth, but are always delighted to invent some new thing; for truly this is certain, as often as we ordain a new worship of God contrary to the word of God, we are by and by blinded, and fall from error to error, than which calamity none greater can come unto us, wherefore St. Paul saith, 2Thes. ii.11." For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Yeaand at thelast they become so blind, that they understand nothing at all of God, as it is in the 14. Psal. 'The fool hath said in his 'heart there is no God:' For it cannot be that the natural man, which consisteth of flesh and blood, and is not instructed by the spirit of God, should judge and understand those things which are of God, as St. Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 14.' The natural man receiveth not thethings of theSpi-'rit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither 'can he knowthem, becausе theyare spiritually discerned.' He which will read more hereof, let him peruse the first chapter of the epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, there shall he plainly enough perceive what blindness is, and what punishment doth ensue, if the word of God being neglected we follow our own inventions and councils; all which we see in our spiritual monks, nuns, and sacrificing priests, and do too truly try it, God grant theymay at the last repent, and give unto God his glory. St. Paul saith of the Gentiles, that they turned the glory of the incorruptible God to the similitude of the image, not only of a corruptible man, but also of birds and four-footed beasts, and of creeping things; so do our Papists also, yea and much more foolishly and madly than the Gentiles, for they make unto themselves a god which is delighted with a shaven crown, with cowles, with eating of flesh and fish, &c. Wherefore God hath given them up through their hearts lusts unto uncleanness,

ness as he did the Gentiles, and that so filthily, that it is better to conceal it than to rehearse it; for if such filthy and wicked things were committed among the Gentiles, which had many wives and many concubines, what would the spiritual men commit, which have forbidden the use of woman and matrimony? briefly, so is it wont to come to pass, where Satan beareth the sway, and the word of God is wrested to serve men's affections, which every man may assuredly persuade himself to be so, yea these things are so known and undoubtedly true, that children in the streets speak and sing of them. Now this is not to be understood of spiritual men only, but even the vulgar sort and common multitude do live so, when the word of God is not admitted: as we see citizens to utter counterfeit wares, merchants to deceive in selling merchandize, and so many crafty practices, so many deceits in subtile dealing, so much regard of usury and private profit, that it cannot be rehearsed. As yet they endeavour again to bring in the mass, to set up their tapers, &c. being persuaded that God is pacified with such trifles, revolting this only in their minds, that their fame may remain untouched and unhurt in the world, howsoever they agree with God. Of such wise and prudent men Christ speaketh here in the gospel, which hear the gospel indeed, and see miracles, but it profiteth them nothing, forasmuch as their heart is not touched. Now Christ saith thus, Ver. 25. 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven 'and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the 'wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. 'Ver. 26. Even so, Father for it seemed good in thy 'sight.' Christ speaketh not here of very children: there may be some notable doctor, whom he calleth a child in this place. On the contrary, there may be a rustical fellow whom he calleth here wise and prudent; in the 8th Psalm David calleth these infants and children, when he saith, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings 'hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies.' They surely by whom God ordaineth strength against his enemies, which should extol his glory through the whole world, were not babes or children in very deed. Those

therefore the Lord calleth children here which count their own works for nothing, attribute nothing to their own wisdom, make nothing of themselves, but think God only to be wise and of understanding. Wherefore they are humble and lowly, and how great soever they are, do submit themselves to God, of whom only they suffer themselves to be taught. Now others are over-wise and will learn nothing of God, yea they presumptuously take to themselves judgment and censure over the doctrine and works of God, whereof thou mayest read in the first and second chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Wherefore Christ saith, Luke xvi. 8. 'The children 'of this world are in their generation wiser than the chil-'dren of light.' But the foolish children of light are of greater estimation before God, than the wise children of this world; of these children the Lord speaketh, 'Thou hast 'hid those things from the wise and prudent, and hast re-'vealed them unto babes.' For the wise and prudent know not these things, but the children and fools know them. How cometh it to pass that the wise know them not? because thou hast hidden them from them. How do the children know them? because thou hast revealed them. What meaneth he hereby, we may gather of those things that were spoken of before, to wit, that he had preached the gospel of the kingdom of God in many cities of Judea, as in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and in his own city Capernaum, which cities, their own wisdom being a hindrance and let unto them, did not receive the foolish preaching of the gospel. The gospel is a good and joyful message which teacheth me to know the glory of God, by which knowledge I obtain pardon of my sins, and life eternal; as Christ saith to his Father in the gospel of John, chap. xvii. 3. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. He saith also in this gospel, No man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whom soever the Son will reveal him." Here he speaketh of the knowledge both of the Father and of the Son. To whom this is revealed, he knoweth, and obtaineth eternal life; but the Father hath hid these things from the wise and pru-

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dent, that they may not know neither the Father nor the Son, and hath revealed them to children, they have the knowledge both of the Father and the Son, and so do obtain everlasting life. Moreover if those things be thus, as they are indeed, what shall become of freewill. Seeing thou hast such heinous and wicked things to be committed in the body, as it is written, Rom. i. go thy ways now and glory in freewill. But this is a goodly free will, to live in such a filthy life, which is altogether unworthy of a man, which is known even among beasts that are without reason. Howbeit it is wont so to come to pass, when God forsaketh us, as soon as we are forsaken of God, by and by Satan cometh, and erecteth his kingdom in us, wherein nothing else but such wickednesses are committed, which notwithstanding are so craftily coloured, and commended with such a pretence of honesty, that it seemeth to be a most holy, yea and an angelic life. What I pray you can man's strength do here? Whereby some go about to bring to pass many things, sweetly persuading themselves that they shall ascend up into heaven thereby. But thou heareſt here that Christ affirmeth, that the Father doth reveal these things; also that it is the good pleasure of the Father that it should be so. Whereby truly he taketh away all the merits of man, here no satisfactions profit, here is no respect of works, it is done by the will and good pleasure of the Father; for he respecteth not the person, as it appeareth before the world. He doth not contemn and reject the sinner, altho' he came laden with sins. After the same sort Christ saith to his disciples, Luke xii. 32. 'Fear not little flock; for 'it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the king-'dom.' This the hypocrites and justiciaries cannot abide, yea they are driven unto fury, senselesness, and madness, when they see simple receivers of custom and very publicans to go before them into the kingdom of heaven, they themselves with their holiness, and goodly and plausible works to the world, being excluded: Whom would not this drive unto madness? who would not take it grievously, that he himself and his things should be in such a case, and nothing at all counted of? But what

shouldest thou do, for what shouldest thou murmur? The good pleasure of God is such, to whom he vouchsafest to open, to him they shall be opened; and from whom he hideth, from him they are hidden, which is undoubtedly true; and mark well that Christ saith here, It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such, thy good pleasure I say, before thy world was made, as St. Paul saith, Ephel. i. 4. God "hath chosen us in him, (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he had made us accepted in the beloved." Here all merit is excluded wherefore let it not come into thy mind, that thou shalt obtain any thing here by thy deserts, neither let thy works, wisdom, and merits puff thee up. Here all rejoicing is taken away, that 'He that glorieth, let him 'glory in the Lord, as Paul saith, 1 Cor. i. 31. It followeth moreover in the gospel, Ver. 27. 'All things are 'delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the 'Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, 'save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal 'him.' Here thou seest the safety which in the kingdom of Christ, by whom we have knowledge and light; if therefore Christ holdeth all things in his hand, and hath power over all things as the Father hath, no man can pluck any thing out of his hands, which he himself also witnesseth in John x. 28. "I give unto them (my sheep) eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Wherefore every Christian, when he hath received the gospel, may worthily rejoice that he is now under the tuition of Christ, and is not any thing troubled because of his sins. If he hath embraced the gospel, Christ under whom he fighteth will guide the matter excellently well. Satan indeed will tempt him with this and that vice; as with adultery, whoredom, theft, slaughter, envy, hatred, wrath and other like sins; but let him not therefore

be discouraged, he hath a King that is strong and mighty enough, by whom he shall be easily defended; notwithstanding it will be very hard to stand strongly, and nothing to yield, wherefore prayer in this case is very needful, others also may by their prayers intreat for thee, that a stout courage and manly heart may be given unto thee to withstand Satan. But it is certain, that thou shalt not be destitute, Christ will easily preserve thee, be not disquieted in mind, let it only be thy care that thou fallest not from his kingdom. Moreover in this Gospel thou seest that Christ is both God and Man; Man, inasmuch as he praiseth God, and giveth him thanks; God, inasmuch as all things are given unto him by the Father; which ought to be great comfort unto us in all things that trouble and afflict us. Whereas he saith, 'No man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither 'knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to 'whomsoever the Son will reveal him.' He in these words overthroweth free will, which will know God and Christ when and how it pleaseth it. Here thou hast plainly from whence the knowledge of God and of Christ is: the Father, saith he, knoweth the Son, and the Son the Father, but how do we know, by this or by that preacher? no truly these are only certain middle instruments, but he only knoweth to whom the Son will reveal. A little before he said that the Father doth reveal or open, here he attributeth the same to the Son. Surely both the Father and the Son do reveal, and as the Father revealeth, so also doth the Son; and Christ also sayeth in John xiv. 26. 'The holy Ghost shall teach you all things.' Wherefore as the Father teacheth, so teacheth the Son, likewise also teacheth the Holy Ghost. And where God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost do not teach, there all things remain void of knowledge. It followeth moreover in the gospel, ver. 28. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. v. 29. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls, v. 30. 'For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Hereunto we have heard how the Lord dealeth with the wise and prudent, namely that he blindeth them

and hideth the gospel from them. Likewise how he is delighted in children and simple ones, to wit, that he endueth them with the right knowledge of himself, and openeth the gospel unto them. But some man may here say and complain; if the matter be so, surely my conscience shall be in great danger, before I hear and know that the gospel doth pertain unto me. I am a wretched sinner and perhaps the gospel pertaineth not unto me, what if I be unworthy? Christ, that he may comfort these weak dismayed, and troubled consciences, saith, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy 'laden, and I will give you rest.' Here are we called unto comfort. Here forget all thy merit and worthiness, for that he plainly saith, 'ye that labour and are heavy laden,' to wit, with the burthen of the law, the anguish and affliction of sins and wherewithal soever the conscience may be troubled. Therefore he doth not express it by name; for he saith not, ye that are troubled with this or that calamity, but simply, ye that are weary and laden. Neither will he have any here excluded, forasmuch as he saith, *all*, which is a singular and special comfort, if any thing trouble us, what kind of temptation soever it be. Whosoever therefore is stricken with the feeling of his sin; and knoweth his own weakness to fulfil the law of God, let him come hither with a cheerful and bold courage, and he shall certainly receive comfort. I will refresh you, saith Christ, as those that are pressed and burthened with sore labour and grief. Let this only be thy care, that thou believe such a loving bidding and promise. After this manner Christ cried in the temple at Jerusalem at a certain feast: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth onme, as the scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive," John vii. 37, 38, 39. Which so cometh to pass: he causeth the gospel to be preached unto us, which he that believeth, is endued with the Holy Ghost, and obtaineth pardon of all his sins. This is truly to refresh him, whose conscience is troubled, to wit, when he feeleth that his sins are forgiven, and that

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he is become heir of the kingdom of God. Neither doth he refresh us only in the anguish and temptation of sin, but he will also be present with us in other calamities and miseries, in famine, war, dearth of victuals, and whatsoever such like can come, in all these he will not leave us destitute of his help, as he cared for the Patriarch Joseph, even in a strange country, with whom he was continually present, as well in prosperity as in adversity. Now sin is a grievous burden, whereof no man is eased, but he whom Christ the Son of God delivereth, and that by the Holy Ghost, whom he hath merited for us of the Father, which maketh our hearts chearful, and ready to do all things which God requireth of us. But what is this that he saith? 'Take 'my yoke upon you.' Is this to refresh, if I take one burden from one, and lay upon him another? this is that whereof we have oftentimes spoken, the gospel doth first make astonished and discourage, and is grievous to the flesh, for it telleth me that all our own things are nothing, that our own holiness and righteousness are of no importance, that all things which are in us are damned, that we are the children of wrath and indignation. This is very hard, and an intolerable burthen to the flesh, and therefore he calleth it a burthen or yoke. But lest these should terrify or make afraid any, for that he is of great authority, high and mighty, and therefore cannot suffer sinful and wretched men, to think him tyrannical and ungentle, he cuts off this suspicion, and saith, 'Learn 'of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' Christ will here lovingly allure us to his doctrine, for he had spoken before of the knowledge of the Father, as if he would say, Flesh and fearful nature counteth me for an austere, severe and rigorous man, but I am not of such a nature, yea, I am humble and meek in heart. I do not terrify men as Moses doth; I do not preach, Do this or that, but I preach forgiveness of sins; neither do I preach that they should give any thing, but rather that they may receive. There is not in me ambition and loftiness, as is in the Pharisees, which desire to be magnified, but I am altogether gentle, and lowly in heart, ready to receive sinners. If so be that they fall again into sins;

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notwithstanding, I do not yet cast them from me, if they fly unto me for succour, and do with a sure confidence look for comfort and help of me. I do not curse men as the Pharisees do, which curse them even for their own ordinances, and for men's devices, and will sooner suffer all the commandments of God to be neglected, than one of their decrees and ordinances not to be observed. As we see in the Papacy, where it is counted a greater offence to eat flesh on Friday, or for a sacrificing priest to marry, than to commit twenty adulteries, or ten homicides. But here thou seest, that even God doth abrogate even his own law, that he may so much the sooner procure sinners unto him. Christ in a singular signification saith here, that 'he is meek,' as if he said, I know how sinners are to be handled, I have tried what a fearful and an afflicted conscience is, as the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. iv. 15. witnesseth, That 'he was in all 'points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' Wherefore let no man be afraid of me, I will handle all easily and gently, I will say nothing with a sower countenance, I make no man afraid so as they come boldly unto me, they shall find rest to their souls with me. To their souls he saith, as if he would say, outwardly in the body there may be affliction, and trouble, and calamities may overwhelm you, but you ought to bear all these things lightly, as he also saith to his disciples, John xvi. 33. 'In me you might have peace, in the world ye 'shall have tribulation.' Wherefore altho' outwardly, all things fall out against us, as though they would suppress and devour us, yet are they nothing to be esteemed of: For we have the feeling of peace inwardly in our conscience. And this is the first fruit of faith, as Paul saith, Rom. chap. v. 1. 'Therefore being justified 'by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord 'Jesus Christ.' Now when our conscience is quieted, and we have peace with God, nothing is able to move us, no nothing shall hurt us, altho' it be evil and against us. Let no man think thus and say, this is not to amend one's state or case, if I take one burthen from his neck, and lay on another, as it is before said. For Christ saith, 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light,'

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as if he would say, the yoke of the law, under which ye lived before, was grievous to be borne, but my burthen is not so grievous, it is light and tolerable, ye may easily bear it. Our wise men say now, that the yoke of Christ is more grievous than the yoke of the law was; and they alledge the 5th Chapter of Matthew: But Christ doth there interpret the law, how it ought to be understood: he doth not make laws, but saith that murders and adulteries proceed from an evil and unclean heart. And so he doth only expound the law of Moses, and prescribeth not any laws there. But the yoke of Christ is therefore easy, and his burthen light, because he taketh away not only ceremonial and man's laws, but even the whole law, the curse, sin, death, and whatsoever may come unto us from the law, all this Christ taketh away from me, and endueth me with his Spirit, by the motion and instinct whereof I do gladly, willingly, and with pleasure perform all the duties of the law. It is therefore also called easy, sweet, and light, for that he himself helpeth us, and taketh part of the burthen, if we be not of strength sufficient. It appeareth indeed grievous and intolerable to the world, but it is otherwise when there is one ready to ease the burthen. It is a common saying, it is good to sing with a fit companion; you two will easily bear the burthen, although one alone were not of strength sufficient to bear it. Thus much shall suffice for the Exposition of this gospel.

SERMON XXXIV.

Christ the Way to eternal Life.

John xiv. 1. to the 14. *Let not your heart be troubled, &c.*

IN the beginning of this gospel Christ declareth wherefore he came, and what office he executeth, which is properly the preaching of the gospel: to wit, that it is he which prepareth dwelling places with the Father, and will, when he cometh again, receive us unto himself. Moreover he saith, that he is the way, the truth, and the life, which he afterwards more plainly ex-

presseth when he saith, 'No man cometh unto the Father 'but by me;' also when he saith, 'If ye had known me 'ye should have known my Father also.' Hereunto moreover pertaineth that which he saith unto Philip, 'He that 'hath seen me, hath seen the Father.' This is the chief and the greatest thing in this gospel, unto which all are to be referred. Hereof we ought to learn, that we are not justified by our own strength, neither saved by our own merits, but are sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, and saved by grace, and that Christ is the way leading to salvation. We will discuss and examine this gospel throughout, as God shall give us grace. These words the Lord spake unto his disciples after his Supper, when he was now about to depart from them. Forasmuch as he had said many things unto them of his departure and passion, they were after a sort troubled and terrified, wherefore the Lord beginneth lovingly to comfort them saying, 'Let not your heart be troubled,' as if he would say, I perceive that my departure doth grieve you, and that ye are therefore troubled; but seeing it cannot be otherwise, be not discomforted, there is no cause why ye should therefore be troubled, I will come again unto you: Notwithstanding ye shall see many things in me before, whereat you will be offended, they shall crucify me, and unworthily handle me: But be not ye troubled because of these things, be not afraid, it will be better shortly after, the will of the Father is such. Howbeit flesh cannot do otherwise but be offended, if it seeth Christ to be crucified, it by and by revolteth from him, it believeth him not, neither counteth him for a Saviour. Which also it doth, when it seeth holy men suffer persecution, to be afflicted and tormented, for then it thinketh that God hath no care of them. Against this offence Christ aforehand confirmeth his disciples, and saith, 'Ye believe in God, be-'lieve also in me,' That is, ye believe that God loveth you, and will glorify you, believe that he will do it after that sort that ye see me glorified, and believe that this my death is life, to the glorifying both of me and of my whole body, that is, of all Christians, and that this death satisfieth for the sins of the world, as the apostles

apostles afterwards witnessed of him in their writings. Thus John saith, 1 John ii. 2. 'He is the propitiation for 'our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of 'the whole world.' Wherefore thou seest that Christ there will have hearts confirmed by faith, and by no other outward thing. He saith moreover, 'In my Father's house 'are many mansions.' These dwelling places have been prepared from everlasting, neither is there any need that they should be prepared of him. Why therefore doth he say, 'I go to prepare a place for you?' This is nothing else but that he goeth and is made Lord of all, whereby he may prepare us unto such dwelling places. For as long as we are not prepared, neither are the dwelling places prepared for us, altho' they be ready by themselves. Wherefore Christ meaneth thus much: There are dwelling places, but not yet prepared rightly and as they must be. Howbeit then shall they be rightly prepared and appointed, when I have taken away the kingdom of death by my death, and am gone to reign, and that by the Holy Ghost: which by faith shall prepare and wholly make you ready also unto such dwelling places. So that this is the simple and plain meaning of these words: There are dwelling places, to wit, where the Father glorifieth, but those dwelling places are not yet prepared, for that the kingdom of death is not yet taken away. This Christ signifieth when he saith, "If it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." In these words the Lord declareth how these dwelling places are prepared namely, by the death of Christ as it is said by which became unto glory, and rule thover all things, which are in heaven and earth. By which death he hath obtained the Holy Ghost for us, which as is before said, may prepare us unto these dwelling places. For through his preparation and working in us, he maketh us believe the gospel, by which believing of faith we are prepared; which could not be done if Christ should not depart and die, and so possess a kingdom over all. This therefore is the sum of this text; they are foreseen, whom the

the Father will glorify, but they cannot be glorified but by Christ, who unless he take away death and sin, all shall be in vain. Here thou seest that all tend unto this, that Christ is he which prepareth the dwelling places, and that we cannot be glorified but by Christ, so that the whole drift of this text is, that we are not justified by man's strength, nor by our own merits, but by Christ, which the whole epistle to the Romans effectually declareth, as also that which is written to the Galatians, and almost all that Paul doth in his epistles, tendeth to the same end. It followeth moreover: 'And whither I 'go ye know, and the way ye know.' For ye believe in me, and have shewed signs in my name, whereby ye ought now to be certain who I am, and what I do, and wherefore I am come. Ye have also seen and heard the testimony of the Father of me. Wherefore ye may now know that the Father will glorify me, and believe that I and the Father are one, it should be therefore superfluous to speak more of these things. But the disciples altho' they were well instructed of the Lord himself, and had seen his miracles, yea and they themselves also had preached the gospel and wrought miracles, were notwithstanding as yet somewhat gross in understanding, neither did they perceive whereof he here spake, and what was that way, and whether the Lord did prepare to depart. Wherefore Thomas bursteth forth into open words and confesseth freely, that he is ignorant hereof, and saith thus unto the Lord: 'Lord, we know 'not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?' Here ye hear and see, that altho' there was faith in the disciples, notwithstanding they were not as yet persuaded that Christ should be crucified, and by his death should enter into his kingdom, and that the same kingdom should be spiritual, which they did not understand even after the resurrection of the Lord: Lord say they, 'wilt 'thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?' Acts i. 6. Those good men were as yet persuaded, that it should be a carnal and wordly kingdom. Such gross things may here and there be found in the gospels, by means whereof the disciples did sometimes stumble and err. All which were committed to writing, for our comfort and con-

confirmation, that we should not be by and by discouraged, when we have sometimes stumbled in faith, and cannot at the first apply ourselves to the works, and word of the Lord. If this happened to these great men, which afterwards should become pillars of Christianity, there is no cause truly that any should marvel, if we also sometimes faint in faith, yea, and let no man be afraid, altho' it falleth out that sometimes through infirmity he so do. It is the work and matter of the Lord, he will amend these things when it seemeth good unto him.

Now of the words we mind to treat somewhat at large. Not much before, when Christ would confirm his disciples in faith, he promised them that they should be glorified. Here he addeth and declareth how and by what means they must by glorified, affirming that that must be by his departure, that is, by his death, and that by that means he must obtain his kingdom. This he hath often repeated unto them, so that now it did become them to know and understand it. Therefore he saith, 'Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know,' but they did not yet throughly understand it, as the words of Thomas do declare. Now, it is certain that there was faith in the disciples, which the words of Peter prove, who answered Christ instead of the rest, when he asked them, whether they also would go away? Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God," John vi. 68, 69. This appeareth also by the words of the Lord which he had said to them a little before at his supper, 'Ye are 'clean,' which he would not have said, if they had not believed; they knew Christ therefore that he is the way to the Father; so they knew the Father also, for that they had seen the miracles whereby he gave testimony of the Son, and had heard the voice of the Father from heaven; Matt. xvii. 5. 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I 'am well pleased; hear ye him.' All these things did greatly increase faith in the Disciples hearts, notwithstanding they did not yet understand, what they should do, and what end concerning the matters of Christ was to be hoped

hoped for. Set before you an example hereof in Abraham, altho' in faith a Son was conceived unto him, nevertheless he was yet ignorant, that he most be offered; neither did faith manifestly shew itself, when a Son was given unto him; so was it also with the Disciples; altho' they had faith, notwithstanding they wanted as yet trial of their faith; now nothing trieth faith better than the cross and persecution; if Abraham had not been commanded to offer his Son, he had had no trial of his faith; when as the Apostles did suffer persecution, they then had a taste and trial of their faith; as long as we may live without temptation, we think that we are indued with a strong faith, but if any adversity cometh to us on any side, we by and by try what faith we rested upon: wherefore St Paul saith, Rom. v. 3. 'We glory in 'tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, 'and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope 'maketh not ashamed.' After the same sort Solomon also saith in the Proverbs xvii. 3. 'The sinning-pot is for 'silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth 'the hearts.' Such a trial is made by the cross and persecution, when we are as it were, crucified according to our old Adam, by which crucifying our faith is tried, and according to this trial of faith, our flesh mortified: the spirit encreasing in the knowledge of Christ; and then is our flesh truly mortified, when we suffer the will of God to bear rule in us, which is then donewhen we submit ourselves to his will howsoever he dealeth with us, renouncing our own. This St. Paul will have us to do, when he saith thus, Rom. xii. 1, 2. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." When Thomas thus confesseth that he is ignorant whether the Lord goeth, neither knoweth the way, the Lord doth not rebuke him with a stern countenance, neither by and by casteth him off, nor driveth him from him, he calleth him neither an ass or an ox,

x, as we are wont to handle the weak, but answering im very gently, saith, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' I, saith the Lord, am the way, by which the Father is gone unto, altho' I be slain; I carry them that believe and are my sheep, on my shoulders to the Father; no other way besides this leadeth unto heaven: He that walketh not this way, goeth out of the way rom the Father; I also am the the truth; for I am the ight which lighteth the world, and I teach true doctrine and make true Christians. Moreover, I also am he life, for it is I that quicken, he that believeth in ne shall not die. This, as I said before, is to teach the Gospel rightly, that is, to shew the true and right way, which leadeth unto eternal life. When the disciples knew not the way that leadeth unto glory, the Lord making no delay, affirmeth unto them, that he is the way; as if he should say, if ye desire to know the way to glory, seek not the strength light, and righteousness of creatures, but look unto me, for I am the way, the truth and the life, although I must be put to death, although I am vile, and of no reputation according to the outward appearance; neither let this offend you, that they which are mine, are subject to persecutions; the right way to the Father is found in me, let none remove you from this persuasion; therefore he saith moreover, 'No 'man cometh unto the Father but by me.' As if he should say, no man can come to the Father by his own strength or merits; the law terrifieth the conscience that it cannot go to the Father; the word of Christ, which justifieth us by the righteousness of Christ, bringeth us to the Father; whereupon followeth that which he afterwards saith: 'If ye had known me ye should have 'known my Father also.' For as no man cometh to the Father, but by the Son, so no man knoweth the Father but by Christ the Son: First, the Father's will is not known, to wit, that he will save us unless we see it in Christ: He which is in the bosom of the Father, hath revealed it unto us. Secondly the Father is not believed for reason by itself doth not understand that it receiveth any thing of God. Wherefore it is needful that Christ declare that bountifulness and goodness

unto us: A troubled conscience flieth the Father, neither can it abide to commit itself unto him; but they that are justified by the word of Christ, do not any more contemn the Father, neither flie him, as the Israelites did, but stand before him as Moses, and are inlightned with divine light, that they may know the power of God and the mercy of the Father; hereupon cometh trust and confidence in him, hereby we know that we receive all things at his hands, and look for all as well spiritual as temporal things of him; all these we must acknowledge to be received by faith, reason cannot attain unto them. For it endeavoureth to obtain God by her own strength and merits, but that endeavour is in vain; wherefore when it is not able to come to the knowledge of God by her own strength, it utterly denieth God, and saith that there is no God, after when it seeth uncleanness in her works, it despaireth, and is in most great distress; but when we are justified by foolish preaching, we come to the knowledge of God the Father, as soon as we believe the word of Christ, and so we try the power of the Father in affliction and adversities, although they be even great; this was shadowed forth in that, that the people of Israel could not abide to hear the voice of God, but desired that Moses might speak unto them; where Christ also was figured, that he should make intercession for us to the Father, and be our mercy-seat; for nature is more weak and frail, than that it can abide to talk with God; wherefore he hath given unto us this his Son a Mediator, in whom and by whom we must have to do with him; when as the Lord so lovingly and gently dealeth with Thomas, and sheweth unto him, how he must come to the Father, to wit, by the Son, and that the Father is known in the Son, there doth yet happen a grosser thing in Philip, who bursteth forth and will not be content with faith, but will know the thing assuredly by feeling and seeing; wherefore he saith unto the Lord, 'Lord shew us the Father and it sufficeth us.' As though he would say, If thou wilt also shew unto us a sign, then will we believe; Philip counteth it not sufficient to believe the word, but goeth about to come to

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the knowledge of the Father by another means than by the word: for seeing that reason cannot believe, he requesteth to be certified by another means and way; by the interrogation therefore of Christ that followeth it is shewed, that the conscience is made certain and quiet by no other thing, than by faith, for that we must cleave to the bare word, and look for no other sign; But Philip thought here that he should be much more certified, if he did see the Father, than if he believed the simple and bare word; this incredulity Christ reproveth somewhat sharply, and saith, 'Have I been so 'long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?' As tho' he should say, I teach and preach, and yet thou knowest me not; dost thou not know that the Father will be known by me, that my word is the word and power of the Father, by which alone he will be known, and by nothing else? For thou hast heard the voice of the Father from heaven after this sort; 'This is my belo-'vedSon, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.' Dost thou not yet understand how the Father is known? The Father is not seen with carnal eyes, as John in his first chapter saith, John i. 18. 'No man hath seen God 'at any time, the only begottenSon, which is in theboſom 'of the Father, he hath declared him.' Wherefore the Lord saith to Philip, 'He that hath seen me, hath seen 'the Father.' This saying is like unto that former when he saith; 'If ye had known me, ye should have known 'my Father also.' That is, forasmuch as the Father will be known by me, seek no other way to know him, but believe my word that I am he, which sheweth unto you the Father, and will make you to know him in me; believe that by me thou hast access to the Father, by this means thou shalt know the Father, by faith thou shalt understand the power and mercy of the Father, and shalt feel him to be comfortable and gracious; the Father will have my word to be believed, and them that believe it, to be saved and obtain eternal life. Seeing therefore that these things are thus, that we cannot know the Father but in the Son, and when we know the Son, we know also the Father; The Lord saith moreover unto Philip; 'How sayest thou then, shew us the

'Father? Believeſt thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?' As if he would ſay, foraſmuch as there is no other way to know the Father but that which I have ſhewed, why I pray thee, doeſt thou not believe my words, ſeeing that I have taught that I am the way, the truth, and the life? Doſt thou not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Believeſt thou not that my divinity, and the divinity of my Father is one? And that the Father will be known by me? But why is the Father known by the knowledge of the Son? Even therefore, for that the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son; for the word by which the Son is known, is the power of the Son and of the Father; wherefore ſeeing the Son is known, by his word, it neceſſarily followeth, that the Father alſo is known thereby; 'Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: Or elſe believe me for the very works ſake.' Here he doth as it were appeal to works, that they may give teſtimony of the word; as if he ſhould ſay, ſeeing that ye cannot be content to believe the word, at the leaſt believe the ſings which bear witneſs of the word and whereby the Father hath given teſtimony of me: for the works and ſigns are teſtimonies of the word; by theſe words Chriſt meaneth nothing elſe but to confirm the conſciences of his Diſciples and all of us againſt the offences of the croſs. For conſciences will know and not believe the bare words of God, but do always doubt and ſay; what if God careth not for thee? and have ſuch like cogitations. Holy and godly men ſeem for the moſt part to be neglected, as objects and moſt contemptible men, inaſmuch as the world according to the will and luſt thereof, rageth and practiſeth tyranny againſt them, and doth almoſt what it liſts; hereupon they are in anguiſh and in danger of faith, and deſire to know the will of God toward them; theſe Chriſt comforteth, that they may ſeek no other comfort but in him and in his death, and believe that he is life, that he beareth rule, and maketh alive them that are dead; and that they ſhould nothing doubt hereof, he maketh them yet more certain, and ſaith, 'Verily verily I ſay unto you, he that believeth

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'on me, the works that I do, shall he do also, and greater 'works than these shall he do;' As if he should say, doubt not any thing but that ye shall know the Father by me, and that my word is the power of God, and that by my word ye shall be sustained, although I be even crucified; ye shall have trial hereof in your selves, for if ye believe in me, ye shall not only work such works and shew such signs as I do, but even greater; which came to pass after the ascension of Christ, when the Apostles wrought greater miracles as well among the Jews as Gentiles, than Christ himself; but what is the cause hereof? The Lord himself addeth it, saying, 'For 'I go unto my Father,' That is, I will begin a Kingdom where I will fulfil all things; here the Lord annexeth the conclusion of all the questions and consolations going before; for a little before Christ had taught, that the Father is known by him, and that is because he is in the Father, he therefore is shewed by that word, by which the Father is shewed; but that ye might confirm this, to wit, that his word is the power of the Father, he added and said, 'He that believeth in me, the works 'that I do, shall he do also.' This is, by faith in me, ye also shall do those works, and know that my word is the virtue and power of God; but why doth he say, 'I go 'unto my Father?' I answer, because Christ is in the Father, therefore doth he the works of the Father, but we do them not also therefore, but that Christ, who is in the Father, is now in us; for to go to the Father is to fulfil all things, and as Paul according to the saying of the Psalm declareth, to give gifts unto men, to lighten and to sanctify; for this is the kingdom of Christ, whereby he reigneth in earth, in the hearts of the believers, and sitteth upon the throne of his Father David the Lord, also speaketh these words, 'I go unto my Father,' to comfort his Disciples; for as he did before begin to confirm them, that they should not be troubled and offended although he should die, but courageously cleave to him, and believe in him; so here he promiseth them that they shall be glorified, for he goeth to the Father, who shall deliver all things into his hands, that he may mightily obtain a kingdom over all things that are in heaven and earth;

earth; wherefore they ought nothing at all to fear; he yet comforteth them more and saith, 'And whatsoever 'ye shall ask in my name that will I do.' As if he should say, as soon as I come to the Father, there is no cause why ye should be careful; for those things that ye have need of and ask, ye shall obtain, I will do this for you because I obtain a kingdom; and he peculiarly addeth, in my Name, whereby he excludeth all our merits, for by Christ we are heard, as also in Christ we are loved, by whom also we are Priests, as Peter saith, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, and acceptable to God; all these things saith Christ, I will do for this cause, 'That the Father may be glorified in the Son.' The Father is then glorified, when glory is given and ascribed unto him, not unto us; that is when we acknowledge that we are saved not by our own merits, not by our own wisdom and righteousness, but do put our trust in his mercy; for he hath given his Son for our sins, and whatsoever we purpose to ask, we must ask it by this Son, and we shall obtain it; wherefore he repeateth these words, and saith, 'If ye shall ask any 'thing in my Name I will do it.' These words tend to this end, that he might make us certainly believe his words, and cleave unto him; this therefore is the sum of this conclusion; he biddeth his Disciples and us therefore believe, for that he goeth to reign; before he affirmeth that he will shew forth a sign, and testimony of his kingdom; and so reign, that he will declare a notable token of his Government, that we may feel and perceive it, to wit, that he will do so great works by us, as he himself hath done, yea and greater also, that he will hear us when we pray and whatsoever we pray for unto the Father in his Name. By these promises the heart must be confirmed and made courageous against the gates of hell. For Christ reigneth by his word, wherefore it is needful, that we exactly know the virtue of the word; for the kingdom of Christ is the power and virtue of God; these things I thought good to treat of concerning this Gospel, let us call upon God for the aid of his grace, that we may be able to understand them, and by them to strengthen our weak Faith.

FINIS.

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